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Cover illustration "Seeing the apparel, but not the person."
Cartoon by Liu Bai 劉白, *Pan-chiao man-hua*
[Five-cents comics], vol.6, no.1 (1932), p.5

THE CONCEPT OF INHERITED EVIL IN THE TAIPING JING 太平經

史 *Barbara Hendrischke*

The material for this paper stems from a corpus of texts edited in the sixth century AD by members of the Maoshan 茅山 Sect, which was the dominant Daoist sect of that period. About one-third of this corpus has come down to us in approximately the same form as it was in the sixth century.[1] In content and language, most of this corpus differs widely from all other transmitted writings of that sect and it can therefore be accepted that the corpus was indeed, as tradition has it, composed from sources completely different from the so-called revealed scriptures which figure prominently in the Maoshan tradition.[2]

It has not been possible to establish any hard evidence concerning the origin and date of the earlier *Taiping* texts.[3] What has come down to us of the sixth-century edition does not give any direct account of its textual sources. The very fact that the texts contained in the *Taiping* corpus have little in common with the other Daoist textual traditions has frequently tempted scholars to assign an early date to the *Taiping* corpus as a whole as well as to its closest Daoist textual relative, the *Xiang'er* 相爾, a Laozi commentary also of dubi-ous background.[4]

There are no hard data—no early citations or parallel texts, no definite bibliographical evidence—to prove the existence of a Han dynasty *Taiping* text. As a result, scholars have often taken refuge in the legendary, where a scripture called *Taiping jing* was linked with several men from Langye 琅邪 in Shandong, namely Gan Ji 干吉 and Gong Chong 宮崇: "Gong Chong [here Gong Song 宮嵩] is from Langye. He was talented in writing and produced more than one hundred chapters. He took the immortal Gan Ji as his teacher. During the reign of Emperor Yuan 元帝 of the Han dynasty [r.48-33 BC] he accompanied Yu Ji 于吉 in meeting the Heavenly Immortal (*tianxian* 天仙) at the Spring of the Crooked Yang (*quyang quan* 曲陽泉—not located), who

I am indebted to Mr. Benjamin Penny of the China Centre, Australian National University, for his help in preparing this paper.

1 Y. Yoshioka has produced a convincing construction of the production and tradition of a sixth-century *Taiping jing*, see Yoshioka Yoshitoyo, "Tonkōben *Taiheikyō* to Bukkyō" [The Dunhuang manuscript of the *Taiping jing* and Buddhism], in *Dōkyō to Bukkyō*, vol.2 (Tokyo: Toshima Shobō, 1970), pp.11–161, at 142 ff. A reliable account of the issues and opinions concerning the dating of the text is to be found in B.J. Mansvelt Beck, "The date of the *Taiping jing*," *T'oung Pao* 66, nos 4 & 5 (1980): 149–82. This writer can, however, neither agree with Mansvelt Beck's criticism of Yoshioka's position (as given on pp.173 ff.) nor with his summary evaluation of previous scholarship. According to my own understanding of Yoshioka's position, he would certainly not consider the *Taiping jing* to be a text originating from the sixth century; a mere non-developmental, non-chronological summary of arguments *pro* or *contra* as presented by Mansvelt Beck does not seem to be conclusive on a subject containing a division-line like the Dunhuang manuscript, which was not considered by some of the scholars cited in Mansvelt Beck's account at all.

2 M. Strickmann, *Le Taoism du Mao Chan*, Mémoires de l'Institut des Hautes Etudes Chinoises, vol. 17 (Paris: Collège de France, 1981), pp.1 ff.

handed to Gan Ji the *Taiping jing* in ten divisions, on blue *(qing* 青*)* strong silk with red characters."[5] The existence of these two personages does not only rely on legend. They are, by Han dynasty standards, well documented in that they were both mentioned in a memorial presented to the throne in 166 AD and transmitted in the *Hou Hanshu*.[6] They were also mentioned by the historian Yu Xi 虞喜 of the fourth century[7] as well as in the *Hou Hanshu* biography of the Langye astronomer and politician Xiang Kai 襄楷, who was the author of the memorial.[8]

In this memorial Xiang Kai speaks about the 'divine book' *(shenshu* 神書*)* of Gan Ji which had been received by Gong Chong of Langye.[9] What Xiang Kai's biographer Fan Ye has to say on this 'divine book' seems to stem from the same source as Yu Xi's account and became crucial to the evaluation of the *Taiping* corpus: "Prior to this [the memorial of 166 AD], during the reign of Emperor Shun (r.126–144) Gong Chong of Langye went to the palace gates to submit the 'divine book' *(shenshu)* his teacher Yu Ji (or Gan Ji) had obtained at the Spring of the Crooked Yang. The Book was in 170 *juan* 卷, all of white silk with red lines, blue headings and red titles, called *Taiping qingling shu* 太平青領書."[10] This text, mentioned by Xiang Kai and defined by the *Hou Hanshu* author and others, became identified with two texts mentioned in the bibliographical chapter of Ge Hong's *Baopuzi* 抱朴子 and also with a text occurring in the Buddhist Mouzi 牟子.[11] Ge Hong lists a *Taiping jing* in 50 *juan*, and a *Jiayi jing* [scripture arranged by cyclical characters] in 170 *juan*; while Mouzi mentions a 'divine book' *(shenshu)* in 170 *juan*. There are obvious reasons for attempting some kind of identification of these texts with Gong Chong's and Gan Ji's text: Ge Hong's 50-*juan* text uses the term *taiping*; the *Jiayi jing* has the same number of chapters as the received version of the *Taiping jing* and its title could be taken as evidence of an arrangement by cyclical characters similar to the arrangement of the received version; and Mouzi's *'shenshu'*, like Gan Ji's text, is also in 170 *juan*.

It seems possible, therefore, to produce a fairly coherent story about the existence of a Han dynasty *Taiping* text. Nevertheless, there is no need to identify that text with the modern *Taiping* corpus. Although the received text agrees in many respects with the descriptions which were given of a Han dynasty *Taiping jing*,[12] this alone is no sufficient reason for an identification.

The dating of texts, thus locating them in a precise chronological and geographical context, is undoubtedly important, but it would seem to be over-cautious to avoid serious interpretation of an important scripture because its date has not yet been established. To do so may in fact be self-defeating because it neglects the contribution which analytical interpretation of the content of a text can make towards its eventual dating and historical position. This is especially true for a very long text which has not yet received much scholarly attention and in particular not much linguistic analysis. The *Taiping jing* is, however, on the list of texts for which concordances are eventually to be published in Hongkong.

3 See J.O. Petersen, "The early traditions relating to the Han dynasty transmission of the *Taiping jing*", pt 1, *Acta Orientalia* 50 (1989): 133–71, and pt 2, *Acta Orientalia* 51 (1990): 133–216, for a critical evaluation of early references to a *Taiping* text.

4 The early date of the *Xiang'er* is, however, based on spurious evidence—a single bibliographical note (by Lu Deming 陸德明 in the early Tang)—and on the general content of the text (see W.G. Boltz, "The religious and philosophical significance of the 'Hsiang Erh' Lao Tzu in the light of the Ma-wang-tui silk manuscripts," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 45 (1982): 95–117), and is perhaps difficult to uphold against terminological arguments as presented by Kobayashi Masayoshi, "Roshi *'Xiang'er zhu'* no seiritsu ni tsuite" [On the completion of the *Xiang'er zhu*], in Akizuki Kanei, *Dōkyo to Shukyō bunka* [Daoist and Buddhist culture] (Tokyo: Hirakawa Shuppan, 1987), pp.81–102. Kobayashi's arguments sound conclusive concerning the supposed authorship of (Han dynasty) Zhang Lu, but they are less convincing concerning the need to assign a fifth-century date to the text.

5 This is the version given in the biography of Gong Chong in the *Shen xian zhuan*, a pre-Tang collection of hagiographies traditionally ascribed to Ge Hong; see Wang Ming, *Taiping jing hejiao* (Beijing: Xinhua Shudian, 1979) [hereafter *TPJHJ*], p.747.

6 See *Hou Hanshu* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1965), 30B, p.1080; cf. R. de Crespigny, *Portents of protest in the Later Han dynasty: the memorials of Hsiang K'ai to Emperor Huan*, Faculty of Asian Studies Oriental Monograph Series, no.19 (Canberra: Australian National University, 1976), p.27.

7 See the citation from Yu Xi's "Zhilin" in the *Sanguo zhi* commentary, *TPJHJ*, p.748.

8 *Hou Hanshu*, 30B, p.1084.

9 Ibid., p.1080, and again in a second memorial on p.1081. Petersen sees a contradiction between the two (in the first instance Xiang Kai says he sent it to the imperial court and in the second instance he says it was handed in by Gong Chong) and points to linguistic problems with the first passage, which he attempts to emend by omitting all references to a 'divine text', which does in fact make for a smoother reading; Petersen omits, however, to venture an explanation

In the following, I shall deal with the *Taiping jing* as if it were a corpus of texts from the beginnings of religious Daoism, embedded in Han dynasty cosmological fantasies and social Utopias. This is what all interpreters of the doctrine of the text have done, in Japan and the People's Republic as well as in the West. In addition, I shall refer to passages from different divisions of the text as if there were some coherence between them, while admitting my basic ignorance concerning the question of whether this seeming coherence is the work of sixth-century editors or dates back to the work's single authorship Some observations will also tackle the composition of the text, in that I shall define the textual layer for all citations used in this paper (as well as this can be done within the bounds of present scholarship) and point out doctrinal differences between these layers.

The first criterion for defining the different textual layers must be the differences in their style as preserved in the received text. These differences were first established by Xiong Deji,[13] and recently refined by Takahashi and others:[14] conferences between a Heavenly Master and his disciples, instigated by a disciple's question and centring on the Heavenly Master's lecture (called layer 'A' in this paper);[15] conferences between a Heavenly Lord (called layer 'B' in this paper *(tianjun* 天君*)*, a Great Spirit *(dashen* 大神*)* and a 'student' *(sheng* 生*)* (called layer 'B'); and parts of the text which do not contain any conversational elements (layer C). 44 of the remaining 59 chapters consist at least partly of A-type texts. Only the following A-type chapters pose any problems concerning their affiliation:

- Chapter 38 is a citation from a different source (or is at least made to look /for the (supposedly mistaken) traditional reading. Concerning the joint sponsorship of a text (*'shang'* by Xiang Kai and *'xian'* by Gong Chong), it should be possible to detect parallel cases. Anyway, whether Petersen's emendation stands or not its relevance for the history of a *Taiping jing* is hard to see, in that the fact remains that Xiang Kai makes mention of Gong Chong's text.

10 *Hou Hanshu*, 30B, p.1084, transl. Petersen, "Han transmission," pt 1, pp.140 ff., who refers to several parallel accounts (see p.142).

11 *TPJHJ*, p.747.

12 See B. Kandel, *Taiping Jing: the origin and transmission of the 'Scripture on General Welfare'—the history of an unofficial text*, Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens, vol.75 (Hamburg, 1979). The content of the transmitted text is well in line with what Xiang Kai's memorial mentions concerning the 'divine text' and with the ideas put forward by Xiang Kai himself: on the basis of Yin and Yang speculation he severely criticizes the present shape of the world; he furthermore demands that the emperor should practice more spiritual meditation and should reduce the application of the penal code, with the aim of eliminating social and psychological tension and increasing the general harmony.

Figure 1

Armed struggle is an evil which the enlightened Daoist was expected to overcome through meditation (see VII, chap.101). Chapters 99, 100 and 101 (all layer C) of the received text of the Taiping jing *are entirely composed of illustrations* (tu 圖), *which were, very probably, included in the text at a later date.*

as such)[16] surrounded by A-type texts. Chapter 39 (A) consists of an exegesis of the cryptic chapter 38, which can therefore be considered as belonging to the body of A-type texts.

- Chapter 50 is of mixed origin, which is unusual in that most other chapters of the transmitted text seem to belong to one particular textual layer. The introductory sub-chapter 67 opens with fifteen lines of dialogue which conclude with an admonition by the teacher, lacking the student's answer. The rest of the chapter (divided into sub-chapters 68–77) consists of treatises containing rhetorical questions but no dialogues.[17] The most obvious structural item is the nominalizing particle *zhe* 者 which is frequently used throughout the chapter to mark the introduction of a new subject. Various subjects (astronomy, acupuncture, burials, music, and others) are briefly dealt with in an informative rather than an admonitory and exhortative manner, as opposed to A-texts, which are almost always exhortative.
- Chapter 55 contains one sub-chapter, 82, which is clearly A, while sub-chapter 83 contains no conversational elements. Its terminology does not differ from A.
- Chapter 71 belongs to A, in my opinion. Most dialogues are set up between a teacher called Divine Man *(shenren* 神人*)* and a student called True Man *(zhenren)*; the Divine Man is once addressed as *shenren tianshi* 神人天師. Divine Man Heavenly Master];[18] mention is made of six grades of student[19] which could relate to the 'True Men from the six directions' of the A-texts. The language of the dialogue has more in common with A- than with B-texts. The occurrence of *shenren* instead of *tianshi* could be a scriptural error or rather a conscious 'correction' of a later period, in line with the *Taiping jing chao*, which always renders *tianshi* as *shenren*.
- Chapter 108 contains an isolated sub-chapter listing nineteen commandments which is not linked to the subsequent A-type sub-chapters.
- Chapter 116 is poorly transmitted but contains enough conversational elements to define it clearly as A.

Thus, the bulk of the *Taiping* corpus consists of A-type texts. No attempts have yet been made to divide these texts into different layers. One external factor which could be symptomatic of divisions in the text is the different way the disciples are referred to: 'True Men' in most of the text, as opposed to 'True Man Shun' in chapters 44, 51, 53 and 65[20] or 'True Men from all six directions' in chapters 65, 72, 86, 88,[21] and interchangably also 'six True Men' or 'six disciples'.[22] However, such a division cannot be supported by any other criteria; chapters 65, 72, 86 and 88 do not share any other terminological or stylistic pecularities.

Another coherent body of texts is made up by chapters using *wei* 惟 as a structural particle and including dialogues between a Heavenly Lord *(tianjun)*, a Great Spirit *(dashen)* and a student *(sheng)*. Takahashi has attempted to set up dividing lines between dialogue and non-dialogue in the

[13] Xiong Deji, "*Taiping jing* de zuozhe he sixiang ji qi yu huangjin yu tianshidao de guanxi" [The authorship and thought of the *Taiping jing* and its relationship with the Yellow Turbans and Heavenly Master Daoism], *Lishi yanjiu*, 1962, no.2, pp.8–25, at 9 ff. Following his useful division of layers Xiong attempts to identify these layers with certain authors. These attempts should not be taken seriously because in 1962 Xiong was for ideological reasons obliged to consider the *Taiping jing* as a pre-Yellow Turban text; see Yoshioka, "*Tonkōben Taiheikyō*," pp.118–24.

[14] Takahashi Tadahiko, "*Taiheikyō* no shisō kōzō" [The system of thought in the *Taiping jing*], *Tōyō bunka kenkyūjo kiyō* 95 (1984): 295–336. For a detailed analysis of the B chapters see Takahashi Tadahiko, "*Taiheikyō* no kaiwatai no seikaku ni tsuite" [On the characteristics of the dialogue-style of the *Taiping jing*], *Tōyō bunka kenkyūjo kiyō* 105 (1988): 243–81. For a critical appraisal of his work see B. Penny, "A system of fate calculation in *Taiping jing*," *Papers on Far Eastern History* 41 (1990): 1–8. For a recent division of the text which closely follows Xiong Deji's guidelines see also Hachiya Kunio, "*Taiheikyō* ni okeru genji bunsho" [Speech and texts in the *Taiping jing*], *Tōyō bunka kenkyūjo kiyō* 92 (1983): 35–82, and Kusuyama Haruki, "*Taiheikyō* rui" [The section '*Taiping jing*'], in *Tonkōto Chūgoku Dōkyō* [Dunhuang and Chinese Daoism], ed. Tsukamoto Zenryo (Tokyo: Daitō Shuppansha, 1983), pp.119–35. Petersen ("Han transmission," pt 2, pp.198 ff.) has produced yet another division which includes parts of the text that have only been transmitted in the abbreviated *Taiping jing chao* version, and that are consequently not easy to attribute to a particular style; passages on p.330 (in which a student [*zi* 子] is addressed) and pp.403 ff. (containing the term *zhenren* 真人) seem to defy the division of Petersen, who allocates them to the *Taiping jing chao* in spite of their A-text characteristics.

Petersen's underlying hypothesis must be called daring. He contests that the B- and C-texts (though in my opinion the C-texts contain too many disparities to be called a textual stratum) add up to exactly 48 *pian*, just two *pian* less than the 50 *pian* (or rather *juan*) which the *Taiping jing* mentioned in Ge Hong's bibliography is said to have contained. Petersen (pp.198 ff.) assumes that

chapters concerned, which, he says, differ in content but have undergone the same editing because they all contain the character *wei* as a structural element. Takahashi's attempt is unsatisfactory. He does not argue for the need of such a division but presents his results as a matter of fact, notwithstanding several problems in matters of detail.[23] His analysis of content, useful as it is, has not convinced me of the doctrinal division between the textual layers he finds. Both layers deal with men's individual virtues and their Heavenly examination; the dialogues depict successful examinations, while the non-dialogue passages refer only to difficulties; the terminology seems identical, judging by the use of *tianjun* [Heavenly Lord], *luji* 錄籍 [registers], and *dashen* [Great Spirit], although, as Takahashi points out, *dashen* is depicted in the dialogue texts only, playing the role of personal mentor to advanced Daoist believers.

Since Takahashi's division is problematic, I will, for the purpose of this paper, use Xiong Deji's less refined division and see the *wei* chapters 110, 111, sub-chapter 190 of 112 and most of chapter 114 (sub-chapters 193–203) as a textual unit (B). Sub-chapters 185–9 of chapter 112 belong to a different layer (C). As Takahashi correctly notes,[24] sub-chapters 185–9 are very close to A-texts: the terms *taiping*[25] and *chengfu* 承負[26] occur and the True Man *(zhenren)* is asked to "serve a country of virtue with the text"—that is, the Heavenly Master text—at hand.[27] Sub-chapter 192 of chapter 114 on the term *xiao* 孝 ['filial piety'] I would consider as part of the subsequent B-type passage, although it contains neither the structural particle *wei* nor dialogue elements. On the other hand, it does not seem to contain terms which would be alien to B-type texts. Whatever its origin, it was placed here because the term *xiao* is of relevance in the subsequent B-texts.[28]

This paper will provide some material to strengthen the assumption that A- and B-type texts form separate and identifiable textual layers, possibly representing at least two separate sources for the sixth-century compilation of a *Taiping jing*, while the rest of the text, here termed C, stems from various different sources and cannot be regarded as a specific layer.

The different layers certainly have doctrinal pecularities; A-texts, for instance, centre on social problems and B-texts on the role of spirits *(shen* 神*)*, or alternatively expressed, A-texts centre on the salvation of the community and B-texts on the salvation of the individual.[29] However, in spite of these differences the layers are not yet well enough defined to speculate on their origin or history. There is, in particular, insufficient reason to identify all A-texts with one individual textual source; since A seems to be characteristic of the corpus in general, it is likely that later additions would have used those same stylistic features in order to blend with the main text. There are, in fact, obvious doctrinal contradictions within A, as can be demonstrated even within the scope of this paper.

/the B- and /C-texts are in fact the received text of this 50-*juan Taiping jing*, and that the A-text is of a later date and identical with the 144-*juan Taiping tongji zhi jing* (cf. the citations in the *Daojiao yishu* and *Yunji qiqian*, as referred to in Yoshioka Yoshitoyo, *Dōkyō kyōten shiron* [Historical discussion of the Daoist scriptures] [Tokyo: Dōkyō Kankōkai, 1966], pp.394, 431. He also assumes that the two texts were brought together simultanously with the creation of a transmission pedigree legitimizing a 170-*juan*-long text.

These assumptions lack proof. It could well be argued that the A-text is, at least in part, older than the rest—a view which the usage of the term *tianshi* 天師, the sociopolitical outlook, the radical millenarianism and many other details seem to confirm.

15 See also J.O. Petersen, "The anti-Messianism of the *Taiping Jing*," *Journal of the Seminar for Buddhist Studies* 3 (1990): 1–36.

16 See M. Kaltenmark, "The ideology of the *T'ai-p'ing jing*," in A. Seidel and H. Welch, *Facets of Taoism* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1979), pp.19–52, for an analysis of this chapter.

17 See *TPJHJ* III, chap.50, p.169: "Can my Dao be of use?" (the characters *ke yong* 可用 are put in place of the two missing characters); p.170: "Now this can change misfortune into happiness and let the people live longer; for what reason?" The received text is divided into ten divisions (indicated in citation by roman numerals), 170 chapters and 366 sub-chapters, all of which seem to be linked to the internal organization of the texts; sub-chapters often deal with one particular conference, introduced by the Heavenly Master who invites the disciples to raise questions, and concluded by the Master's departure; chapters often deal with related subjects and show stylistic uniformity; divisions—at least the earlier ones—show some topical uniformity. There seems to be no reason not to credit the corpus' sixth-century editors with all three levels of division; the Dunhuang list of contents is in this respect almost identical with the received text.

18 See *TPJHJ* V, chap.71, p.287. Sub-chap.107 (p.281) introduces the Heavenly Master as teacher; the phrase *'wei tian ming shi lu shi zhi'* 唯天明師錄示之 in the last line of p.281 must be emended to *'wei tian shi ming lu ...'* 唯天師明錄. The Tang dynasty /OVER

Taiping jing chao always substitutes *shenren* [Divine Man] for *tianshi* [Heavenly Master]; occasionally this substitution occurs in the *Taiping jing* (see *TPJHJ* III, chap.44, pp.104, 108 A; chap.51, p.190 A; V, chap.71, p.287); cf. Hachiya, "Genji bunsho," p.36. Ofuchi Ninji, in his "Taiheikyō no rekishi ni tsuite" [On the history of the *Taiping jing*], *Tōyō gakubō* 27.2 (1940), has pointed out that the substitution of *shenren* for *tianshi* was based on the fact that from Kou Qianzhi onwards 'Heavenly Master' had become a religious title reserved for human figures as opposed to superhuman beings.

19 See *TPJHJ* V, chap.71, p.289; those mentioned are *shenren* [Divine Man], *zhenren* [True Man], *xianren* [Saintly Man], *daoren* [Man of the Dao], *shengren* [Eminent Man], and *xianren* [Worthy Man].

20 See *TPJHJ* III, chap.44, p.104; IV, chap.51, p.187, chap.53, p.195, chap.65, p.224.

21 See *TPJHJ* IV, chap.65, pp.224, 229, 231; V, chap.72, p.291; VI, chap.86, pp.312, 320, chap.88, p.331.

22 See *TPJHJ* V, chap.68, pp.258 ff.: *liu zi* 六子 and *liu ren* 六人; VI, chap.86, pp.320, 323. The number 'six' is based on a misunderstanding of the term *liu fang zhenren* 六方真人. The different denotations also occur in combination in *liu fang zhenren Shun deng* [the True Men of the six directions, Shun and the others], V, chap.65, p.224. The 'six directions' *(liu fang)*, including above and below, are a specific Buddhist equivalent of the *liu he* 六和, as they are called in *Zhuangzi* 2 and other ancient sources. There is also the term *liu duan zhenren Shun* 六端真人純 [possibly 'the True Man of the six corners Shun'] *TPJHJ* III, chap.50, p.168.

23 Cf. Takahashi, "*Taiheikyō* no kaiwatai," p.244 (*TPJHJ*, p.528): non-dialogue passages including dialogues; or "*Taiheikyō* no kaiwatai," p.268 (*TPJHJ*, p.554): dialogues including long passages of non-dialogue text.

24 See Takahashi, "*Taiheikyō* no kaiwatai," p.272.

25 See *TPJHJ* VII, chap.112, p.576.

26 Ibid., p.579.

27 Ibid., p.575.

The World-View of the Taiping Jing

The importance of the scripture lies in the originality and uniqueness of certain elements of its doctrine. The subject under discussion in this paper can serve as an example of this. However, it seems feasible to start with a brief review of a few general assumptions which the authors of the *Taiping jing* shared with many Han dynasty thinkers.

First, there is the general belief in cosmic interaction and a formal system of correspondences which became predominant around the second century BC. According to this belief, there is a universal coherence of all beings and phenomena which is represented by what we might call the order of nature—that is, the astronomical order, the sequence of the four seasons, the division of matter into five phases or elements, and the cosmic division into Yin and Yang. This order can be termed Dao but there are other words as well. It is often seen to be linked to Heaven as its guarantor or administrator and certainly as its symbol, but rarely the second century *bc. According* to his belief, there is a universal coherence of all beings and phenomena hich is represented by what we might call the order of nature—that is, the astronomical order, the sequence of the four seasons, the division o matter into five phases or elements, and the cosmic division into Yin and Ya g. This order can be termed Dao but there are other words as well. It s often seen to be linked to Heaven as its guarantor or administrator and ce tainly *as its* symbol, but r*arely g jing* is rigid in its systematic transposition of social reasoning into cosmological language. This is obvious when the arguments for the prohibition of alcoholic beverages in the *Baopuzi* are compared with the parallel arguments in the *Taiping jing*.[30] The *Baopuzi* refers to the human and social difficulties which result from excessive drinking, while the *Taiping jing* mentions that drinking will result in the unbalanced dominance of water over the other elements.

For the purposes of this paper, the rigid ethical consequences this system entails should be kept in mind. If the world is a single coherent body, any human being at any moment carries responsibility for the world in general and must accordingly adjust his activities to certain overriding requirements. There is no way in which this responsibility can be avoided or shifted. Natural events caused by Heaven provided men with constant feedback on whether or not they were successful in their cosmic task. When the weather was not appropriate for the seasons, when astronomical 'irregularities' occurred, when misshapen creatures were born, or when anonymous texts were found in mysterious circumstances, the intellectuals in charge detected messages in these events and attempted to translate them into political policies. Or rather, all changes in policy were in need of such supporting 'messages' that could be taken as conveying Heavenly agreement or criticism.

The *Taiping jing* authors envisaged a set of reforms based on this view of the world in order to rescue men from the imminent and utter disaster into which they believed the world was rushing and to lay the social foundation

for the age of general peace—*taiping*. While this expectation of imminent cataclysm was commonplace in early Chinese Daoism,[31] the laying out of the reform programme in the *Taiping* corpus was an isolated event in the context of socio-political reasoning.[32] The scripture proclaimed itself and those who publicized it to be the main vehicle of these reforms. Texts and men were, so it is stated, sent by Heaven to save mankind.

The programme of reform was deeply moralistic. Personal as well as general social salvation was seen as the outcome of the rigid implementation of a new behavioural code. This code was sanctified by its Heavenly connections. Heaven here was a superhuman, divine entity, concerned for men, happy or unhappy with their conduct, and consequently offering rewards or punishments. It could, however, never be approached like a person, had no individual dislike or sympathy and no individual choice. Heaven's characteristics were rather imagined to be like those of the astronomer's sky—that is, bound by natural laws. So when men were said to follow the will of Heaven this did not mean that they followed arbitrary commandments but that they regulated their conduct according to natural requirements. Heaven was a crucial term for the Han dynasty world-view and consequently one could, as is often the case with central concepts, point to various contradictions or at least apparent contradictions in its usage in the *Taiping jing*.

This world-view is consistent as far as the fate of the world in general is concerned. The world's decay, which most thinkers took as obvious, was explained as an outcome of men's moral or spiritual decadence, either through human disobedience against a code of behaviour established by the ancients or neglect of the requirements of nature. From Confucius down to the social critics of the second century of our era and beyond, human aberration from the so-called true course or Dao was usually seen as the reason behind all wars, diseases, bad harvests and other vexations of mankind.

However, this world-view runs into trouble when applied to specific groups or to individuals, in that its basic message—if someone is good he will also be happy—is easily falsified. Various concepts were introduced to deal with this problem. There was, for instance, the concept of an individual's predetermined fate, according to which the years of life available to a person were decided at birth.[33] Family background, with its assembled good or bad deeds, was also seen to influence the course of an individual's life.[34] This second idea was taken up in the *Taiping* corpus of texts and transformed into a theory of the origin and termination of communal and individual evil.

[28] See *TPJHJ* VII, chap.114, p.596, l.9, and p.605, l.7.

[29] Cf. Hachiya, "Genji bunsho," p.54.

[30] See *TPJHJ* VII, chap.108, p.511 (A), and *Taiping jing chao*, p.214; cf. *Baopuzi*, "Waibian," chap.24.

[31] See E. Zürcher, "'Prince Moonlight': Messianism and eschatology in early medieval Chinese Buddhism," *T'oung Pao* 68 (1982): 2–75, at 3.

[32] See Kaltenmark, "Ideology," and W. Eichhorn, "*T'ai-p'ing* und *T'ai-p'ing* Religion", *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung* 5.1 (1957): 113–40.

[33] See *TPJHJ* VII, chap.111, p.547 (B); cf. Penny, "Fate calculation," pp.1–7, at 4.

[34] See below, n.87.

An Explanation of the Term Chengfu

The term *chengfu* is at its explanatory best in dealing with the impact which communal evil exerts on the lives of individuals. *Chengfu* has been rendered in Western languages as 'original sin', and it is the only Chinese concept which has ever been a candidate for equalling this Western term. For the purposes of this paper the Chinese term will be used because *chengfu* differs in so many respects from 'original sin' that it would be misleading to equate the two.

The word *chengfu* is made up of two characters. The etymological explanation for *cheng* is two hands receiving a token of rank *(jie* 節*)*.[35] So *cheng* can be rendered as 'to receive an object with both hands and to hold it', that is, to carry with one's hands; this can also be seen as akin to the term *bao* 抱 [to embrace]: to press the object with one's hands to the chest, which is probably the way it is understood in the *Taiping jing* definition of the term. The character *fu* consists of 'man' and 'shells', interpreted by Bernhard Karlgren as a man carrying shells around his neck,[36] representing the carrying of loads on the back. When the two characters *cheng* and *fu* occur together in general language (though dictionaries do not list the entry), they mean 'to carry'.[37]

The *Taiping jing* offers an analysis of the term, put forward in chapter 39 of division III,[38] a conference between the Heavenly Master and the True Men which consists mainly of analyses of characters, presented as glosses to a brief and cryptic 'Declaration of the Heavenly Master'. The 'Declaration' does not mention the term *chengfu* but the Heavenly Master uses it in his explanations. At the end of the conference the True Man inquires after the term, which induces the Heavenly Master to produce the most detailed analysis of it as contained in the received text of the corpus. From the point of view of language the chapter appears coherent, and through its occurrence in this chapter the analysis of *chengfu* is linked with other central doctrinal statements. Chapter 38 which contains the 'Declaration' and chapter 39 which explains it are the only instances where the *Taiping jing* presents scriptural exegesis. Max Kaltenmark suggests that at least the Declaration if not the rest of the passage antedates the Daoist movements of the second century AD.[39]

The True Man asks whether the words *cheng* and *fu* in the '*chengfu* theory' *(chengfu shuo* 承負說*)* have the same meaning. The preliminary definition is that *cheng* refers to 'before' and *fu* to 'after'. According to the subsequent explanation, *cheng* is the original action of the ancestors *(xianren* 先人*)* who first received *(cheng)* the will of Heaven *(tianxin* 天心*)* and then slowly lost it, while *fu* is the secondary action by which they put the load on the backs of their descendents. This explanation lacks precision. This may, of course, be due to the Western reader's limited understanding but it may also be due to the text's clumsy and inexpert mode of expression.

35 Morohashi Tetsuji, *Dai Kan-Wajiten* (Tokyo: Daishukan, 1955), no.11852.

36 B. Karlgren, *Analytic dictionary of Chinese and Japanese* (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1923), p.51.

37 Cf. p.26 of *Shi han shen wu*, an apocryphal Shijing commentary, in *Ishoshūsei*, ed. Yasui Kōzan and Nakamura Shōhachi (Tokyo: Meitoku Shuppansha, 1985). The text does not occur in bibliographies. Without giving much evidence Yasui and Nakamura (p.13) claim that it is identical with Zheng Xuan's (127–200) *Shijing* commentary which is otherwise lost.

38 *TPJHJ* III, chap.39, p.70 (A).

39 Kaltenmark, "Ideology," p.38.

As if to make up for this lack of expertise the text goes directly from its unsatisfactory attempt at a neat definition of the two characters into an explanation of the doctrine of *chengfu*: "*Fu*: the various catastrophies do not go back to the government of the One Man *(yiren* 一人) but to a successive lack of balance *(bu ping* 不平)."[40] Those who live before put a load on the back of those who come later. This is why it is called *fu* (to carry a load on the back)."[41] This is followed by yet another attempt: "*Fu* means that the ancestors put a load *(fu)* on their descendents." Various attempts to give an explanation are lined up one after the other. This is a good example of the principle which frequently governs the composition of the scripture. Its verbosity is not accidental but intended by its authors. The modern text contains the clear dictum that the longer the text the better, because through its length, it improves its chances of containing some truths.[42] The disciples are depicted as if they were under an obligation to jot down every single word uttered by the Master[43] and the texts of the *Taiping* corpus often appear to be the result of their efforts. The editing, we must conclude, was done with admirable respect for the original language. Otherwise the sixth-century editors would have reduced the text's oddities and produced a version closer to the smooth Tang dynasty *Taiping jing chao* than to the received text.

From the way the two verbs are used it seems that they can both function transitively, followed by an object as, for instance, in the following: "In outgoing antiquity they carried and passed on the negligence of middle antiquity."[44] The expression *gengxiang* 更相 [each other] is often added to signify the action of continuous transmission; for instance, "Emperors and kings received from each other and passed on to each other *(gengxiang chengfu)* misery and bitterness."[45] The form *gengxiang chengfu* occurs also in what we might call a passive mode: "All sorts of harmful influences (*qi* 氣 [vapours]) were aroused and could not be kept under control; neither formerly nor latterly were they put into order; they were received and passed on from one to the other *(gengxiang chengfu)*."[46] The object of reception and transmission is always evil and consists either of evil deeds and customs or of the misery resulting from them.

Its usage, though, is rarely that of two verbs functioning as a sentence's predicate, but rather that of a noun, clarified by terms like 'risk' *(ehui* 厄會),[47] 'calamity' *(zaie* 災厄)[48] or 'punishment' *(ze* 責),[49] to which it would be linked as a nominal attribute is linked to another noun, as in *chengfu zhi zai* 承負之災. This phrase resembles an expression like *tian zhi dao* 天之道 'the *dao* of Heaven', or *tian zhi fa* 天之法 'the law of Heaven', where the term *tian* alone would suffice, from a formal point of view, but where *dao* or *fa* function to specify the meaning of *tian* and help to lead the reader or listener quickly in the appropriate direction. The same applies to *chengfu*: when *chengfu* is distinguished as a 'calamity' or a 'punishment' the reader is guided away from the process of transmission to its outcome. The term can, however, have this meaning without any adjuncts. So Ofuchi Ninji assumed

[40] For the terms *ping* or *taiping*, cf. Kaltenmark, ibid., p.21 ff.; when defining the term as used in the *Taiping jing* it must be kept in mind that *ping* is the word for the proper balance between Yin and Yang; see *Yiwei jilantu*, an *Yijing* commentary attributed to Zheng Xuan, in Yasui and Nakamura, *Isho shūsei*, pp.116 ff., 129.

[41] *TPJHJ* III, chap.39, p.70 (A).

[42] See ibid., III, chap.41, p.84 (A); and Hachiya, "Genji bunsho," p.41.

[43] See *TPJHJ* III, chap.35, p.34 (A): "The True Man [i.e., the disciple] will take note of all the Master has to say in order to bring salvation to emperors and kings"; ibid., III, chap.41, p.83 ff. (A), where it is described how the Master will give a complete report, while the True Man will write it down in full and will be careful not to omit a single phrase; Master and disciple have to do this for the sake of Heaven, to terminate *chengfu*; the punishment for carelessness with words is severe.

[44] See *TPJHJ* VI, chap.96, p.418 (A). It is, for example, used as a predicate parallel to *shi* [to lose] in chap.93, p.385 (A): "Nowadays after the former kings have little by little lost it [i.e. the good will of Heaven] and have received and transmitted [evil], everyone is prone to lose it and it is therefore difficult to keep the government in balance *(ping)*."

[45] See *TPJHJ* VI, chap.102, p.459 (A).

[46] Ibid., VII, chap.109, p.522 (A).

[47] Ibid., III, chap.39, p.66 (A).

[48] Ibid., VI, chap.96, p.416 (A).

[49] Ibid., VI, chap.92, p.370 (A).

that the term means 'load', made up of *cheng*, which would be the load received from ancestors, and *fu*, which would be the load handed on to posterity.[50] Although I am convinced by the passages cited above that the term is basically verbal and that it retains this quality throughout its use, its function often appears to be ambiguous, as in the sentence: "They caused great confusion and disorder for the Dao of heaven and earth and thereby created the calamity of receiving and transmitting," (or perhaps "...calamities which were received and transmitted").[51] When the term is used separately it often reads like an abbreviation of *chengfu zhi zai* 'the calamity of receiving and transmitting' as in the expression *chengfu zhi hou* 承負之後 in the following sentence: "So after [the calamity of] receiving and transmitting [had begun], the men of outgoing antiquity were entirely without trustworthiness."[52] For the sake of clarity and brevity I will often leave the Chinese term untranslated instead of being rendered by the appropriate 'calamity of receiving and transmitting'. On the other hand, a full and correct translation would probably have to make use of this or a similarly roundabout phrase, as in the following passage, which states that the Heavenly Master and his listeners all live in the era of *chengfu*: "Nowadays with *chengfu* [i.e. the calamity of receiving and transmitting evil] *(jin zhe chengfu erh ...)* there are many different texts which try to outwit each other...."[53]

50 Ofuchi Ninji, "*Taiheikyō* no shisō ni tsuite" [On the thought of the *Taiping jing*], pt 1, *Tōyō gakuhō* 27 (1941): 145–68, at 152.

51 See *TPJHJ* VI, chap.96, p.420 (A).

52 Ibid., p.427 (A).

53 Ibid., III, chap.48, p.155 (A).

Accounts of the Origin of Chengfu

The True Man, that is, the disciple, speaks about a 'doctrine of *chengfu*' *(chengfu shuo)*. This doctrine is referred to throughout the *Taiping* texts. However, in the Dunhuang table of contents[54] there are three chapter-titles which contain the term. Only one of these has been transmitted into the modern text, the other two (sub-chapters 38 and 40) are lost except for a fragmentary and abbreviated version of sub-chapter 40 included in the Tang dynasty *Taiping jing chao* 太平經鈔. The *Taiping jing chao* text introduces the chapter by outlining the purpose of the theory:

> Since the beginnings of heaven and earth, unfavourable evil influences have never been eliminated: when they were eliminated they arose again. Why is this? Now, longevity is the most valuable heavenly treasure which is a special gift to the virtuous; it cannot be obtained by pretence. If you want to know something about this treasure: When all the ten-thousand beings of heaven and earth, in all six directions and eight distances, have not a single reason for hidden resentment and are very happy, only then will you gain longevity. If only one single event causes discontent, there will be harm, death and utter ruin. In human activities there are some who work hard to do good and yet the results are evil. Others work hard to do evil but the results are good. This is not because those who claim themselves worthy speak not the truth. When someone strives to be good but evil results, this is because he receives and transmits the mistakes men have formerly made [or, 'the mistakes of his ancestors *(xianren)*']....[55]

54 Cf. Yoshioka, "*Taiheikyō to Bukkyō*," n.1, pp.25 ff.: sub-chaps 38 and 40 in division II [now lost] and sub-chap.48 of chap.37 in the received text.

55 *TPJHJ* II, p.22 (from the *Taiping jing chao*, hereafter *TPJC*); see n.89 below for a discussion of the last sentence.

In this passage the opinion that evil which cannot be otherwise explained is due to past mistakes or trespasses is clearly expressed. This has two consequences of which the listener is frequently reminded. The first is that the current generation is relieved of all responsibility for causing the misery it suffers; all blame is laid at the feet of previous generations and no one should blame his contemporaries for the misery he suffers because the reasons lie in the past. The second is that all demands on individual behaviour are endowed with a pressing social obligation, in that individual evil behaviour will increase the load of misery transmitted to later generations.

Thus, the term is brought up whenever the behavioural code proclaimed by the Heavenly Master needs to be given additional authority. Any aberrations from the proper behaviour as laid out in the Heavenly Master's text will, it is proclaimed, lead to *chengfu*. Such aberrations date back into previous historical eras, and they are seen to have occurred because the correct doctrine or the correct code were not yet available.[56] Most central points of the *Taiping jing*'s moral code are explicitly linked to *chengfu*, for instance the interdiction of female infanticide: if not stopped this is bound to lead to an offence against the Way of Heaven.[57] There is a great sense of urgency in these warnings: after the Heavenly Master's code has been made public mankind has no excuse not to mend its ways.

Chengfu is also seen to result from the interruption of communication between man and Heaven. When unusual events, which can disclose Heaven's dissatisfaction with human endeavours, are not made known to the political authorities, Heaven is 'angry' *(nu* 怒*)*, and *chengfu* results.[58] The 'anger' or 'distress of Heaven' *(tian bing* 天病*)* is often introduced as the explanatory link between certain human actions and the resulting *chengfu*.[59] Heaven in its 'anger', however, has no individual traits but functions reliably as if guided by natural law, in spite of the anthropomorphic emotions attributed to it.

The proper employment of men is another tenet in the *Taiping jing*'s code of action sanctified by its link with *chengfu*. It is said that *chengfu* will arise when men are given work of which they are not capable, when they are presented with tasks which are too demanding, or when they turn away from their training and indulge in intrigues.[60]

Thus, the main reason for the origin of *chengfu* is moral. There is, however, another reason which we might call psychological. Men create *chengfu* not only by offensive action but also by their hostile or resentful attitude. The text gives one example of this when it explains how infanticide causes *chengfu*: The strong resentment felt by women against being despised and maltreated is supposed to be the final cause for the reception and transmission of evil.[61] Unlike the emotions of Heaven, this link is not just explanatory but also functional, as can be seen from the following highly political instance: when the ruling government is blamed for calamities, which are in fact the outcome of *chengfu* (that is, the outcome of the misbehaviour of previous rulers and of their people),

56 See ibid., III, chap.39, pp.66 ff. (A).

57 Ibid., chap.35, p.36 (A).

58 Ibid., chap.37, p.55 (A).

59 See *TPJHJ* VI, chap.102, p.467 (from the *TPJC*), style not clear, preceded by (A), followed by (C); ibid., III, chap.45, p.121 (A): *chengfu* is caused by the 'anger' *(nu)* of heaven and earth.

60 Ibid., VI, chap.96, pp.418 ff. (A).

61 Ibid., III, chap.35, p.36 (A).

this false accusation will in turn increase *chengfu*.[62] Of course the application of the penal code is also of concern as it would necessarily lead to resentment and accusations. One way to avoid an increase in *chengfu* is to keep the 'great balance' *(taiping)* in mind and not to make use of the penal code.[63] The term for men's resentment of unfair and unjust treatment is *yuanjie* 冤結,[64] which was first used in the *Chuci* 楚辭[65] to describe an undefined sadness in a woman. The two characters are used several times in Xiang Kai's memorial[66] to prove how dangerous it is to apply punishments.

Throughout the *Taiping jing* resentment is depicted as a major cosmic force which can cause Heaven to issue calamities. When punishments are few and the people enlightened and aware of evils being inherited and not necessarily created by their contemporaries, this resentment will subside. Another psychological aspect of *chengfu* is social disagreement: when ruler, officials and the people are not of the same opinion this also causes the transmission of evil.[67] This seems to be a rare attempt to theorize on the psychological aspect of government which on a practical level had been of great concern to Chinese thinkers.

Exactly when *chengfu* originated is not given much serious consideration. It lies somewhere in the past. The authors never pay much attention to historical detail. Their only concern is the broad chiliastic tendency which is the impetus behind their missionary appeal. This neglect of the historical—as opposed to a concern for nature—makes it possible for three different dates to be posited for the disastrous start of *chengfu*:

1. *Chengfu* is as old as heaven and earth: "From the division between heaven and earth, the distress of *chengfu*... ."[68] The phrases 'for thirty thousand years'[69] or 'for ten-thousand times ten-thousand generations'[70] point to a similarly long time-span.
2. *Chengfu* is a phenomenon of outgoing 'lower' antiquity, that is, of a period which borders on the lifetimes[71] of the Heavenly Master and his listeners.[72] Intellectual confusion and social disintegration are depicted as its main characteristics.[73]
3. *Chengfu* is older than outgoing antiquity, but no other date is given: "The causes from which this stems lie in the distant past and are not only the mistakes made by men of the later generations of our present *(jin* 今*)* outgoing antiquity, but were received and transmitted from one to the other."[74]

Positions 1 and 2 can appear in one and the same passage.[75] Position 1 suggests that all human errors are somehow transmitted from the time of mankind's origins; position 2 points to the disastrous consequences of this transmission, which became manifest only at a later stage. The term *chengfu* is obviously broad enough to include the covert early transmission as well as its later consequences.

There is, however, a great difference between the two positions when it comes to the interpretation of history. According to position 1, historical

62 Ibid., chap.57, p.58 (A).

63 Ibid., chap.40, p.80 (A).

64 Ibid., chap.49, p.165 (A).

65 See *Chuci*, ed. SBBY 4, 31a, transl. D. Hawkes, *Ch'u Tz'u* (London & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), p.77.

66 See *Hou Hanshu*, 30B, pp.1077 [*yuan* only], 1078, 1081.

67 See *TPJHJ* III, chap.48, p.155 (A).

68 Ibid., chap.41, p.84 (A); *TPJHJ* VI, chap.91, p.361 (A); chap.96, p.416 (A); chap.102, pp.459 (A); p.460 (A).

69 See *TPJHJ*, p.22 (from the *TPJC*).

70 See *TPJHJ* IV, chap.66, p.237 (A).

71 See the term *jin xiagu* 今下古 used in *TPJHJ* III, chap.36, p.46 (A), as below, n.74.

72 Ibid., chap.36, p.52 (A); ibid., VI, chap.96, p.427 (A).

73 Ibid., III, chap.49, p.162 (A).

74 Ibid., chap.36, p.46 (A).

75 Ibid., VI, chap.96, pp.418 (A), 416 (A).

76 The idea of golden antiquity is, of course, not alien to the *Taiping jing*; see Kaltenmark, "Ideology," p.22; in describing the doctrine of a text it seems appropriate, however, to stress all attempts of its authors to disagree with established dogmas.

77 See *TPJHJ* III, chap.41, pp.84 ff. (A).

78 Cf. Kamitsuka Yoshiko, "*Taibeikyō* no *shōfu* to *taibei* no riron ni tsuite" [On the logic of *chengfu* and *taiping* in the *Taiping jing*], *Nagoya daikyōyōbu kiyō* A-32 (1988): 41–75.

79 See above, n.68.

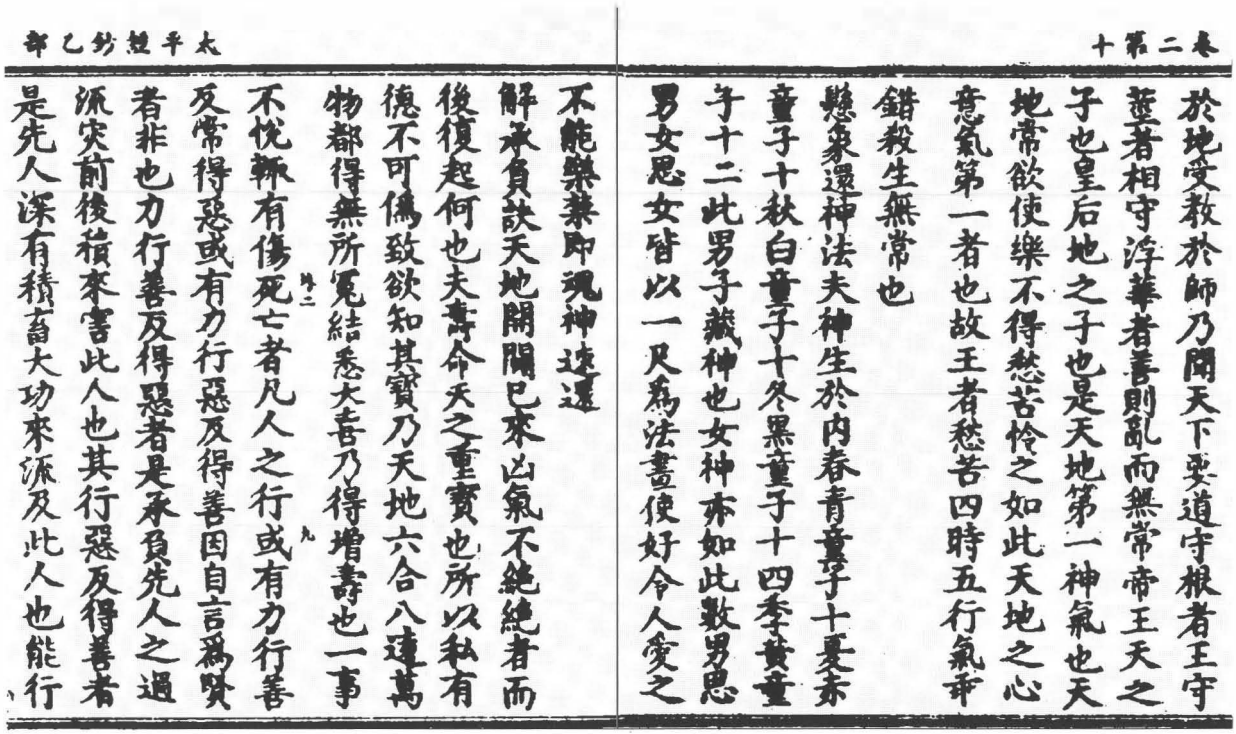


Figure 2

This passage is taken from the Ming dynasty Daozang *version of the* Taiping jing chao. *It explains the origin and overwhelming impact of* chengfu *(see above, p.12)*

development was evil from the start and led to continuously accumulating misery and suffering, while position 2 sanctifies antiquity[76] as a period where evil was only minor and did not manifest itself. The anti-traditional position 1 does not leave room for any true golden age in the past to which mankind could return. Judging by the number of times it occurs, this is the dominant position in the corpus and is compatible with the great interest in the recent past which is frequently expressed in the *Taiping jing*. The text mentions, for instance, that in collecting and editing manuscripts the products of more recent authors should not be neglected.[77] The texts never cite historical precedents to defend articles of their doctrine and they depict the Heavenly Master and his disciples as pioneers and not as reincarnations or followers of a saint from distant antiquity.

This opinion is squarely opposed to that of Kamitsuka Yoshiko, who sees the return to an ideal past which it is imagined occurred before the outbreak of *chengfu* as the aim of the *Taiping* texts.[78] Unfortunately she does not comment on the phrase "From the division of heaven and earth, (evil) was received and transmitted ...," which occurs frequently throughout the text.[79] Kamitsuka's main argument is based on the text's flowery description of ancient antiquity as a period when men were without concerns. I would read some of the passages she cites in a slightly different manner, but considering the fact that hardly any arguments can be found in Han dynasty texts which would run counter to the dominant belief in a long-lost Golden Age, we cannot expect the *Taiping* texts to be in open disagreement with it. However,

the texts do seem to contain some slight modifications of the golden past, as in the following passage cited by Kamitsuka: "Now concerning the men of high antiquity, each one knew the true doctrine *(dao)* and there was only little evil influence *(xie qi* 邪氣*)*."[80] What is remarkable in this passage is not the first part, which reflects the common belief, but the second part which mentions that evil occurred even in high antiquity. The same passage continues with the following sentences: "But when the influence of *taiping* arrives evil will of necessity spontaneously vanish. Now, from the origin of heaven and earth onwards evil influences have become very great and have been received and transmitted from one generation to the next. So even if the influence of a government of *taiping* arrived, how should it all of a sudden subdue all this?" From this it seems clear that the problem faced nowadays is more complex than can be mended by a simple return to the past. Other passages cited by Kamitsuka seem to pose similar problems. There is, for instance, the long passage[81] on the virtues of high antiquity and the vicissitudes of the recent past (*xiagu* 下古 [outgoing antiquity]) which includes the sentence: "But now I speak on behalf of Heaven in order to abolish the load which was transmitted and received since the division of heaven and earth."[82] Some passages cited by Kamitsuka refer to history as a process of deterioration, manifest, for instance, in the increasing relevance of the criminal code more than in the existence of a golden age before this deterioration began.[83] There are instances, however, where the past is depicted as truly golden,[84] but (to return to Kamitsuka's argument) these are not mentioned in connection with the reception and transmission of evil.

Everyone on earth suffers from *chengfu*. Heaven and earth, emperors and kings, the hundred families and all animals and plants are mentioned as victims.[85] But it is caused only by men, although the resulting damage may appear to have been sent by heaven or earth.[86] Who exactly causes it? Three groups are mentioned: the ancestors; mankind; and emperors, kings and administrators.

Not many passages in the corpus definitely link *chengfu* with intra-family transmission. In the first instance it is mentioned in warnings against doing evil: "The children will receive and transmit *(heguo chengfu* 何過承負*)* the misdeeds of their parents in excess and will sometimes be called children of thieves and of robbers or meet with their own ruin."[87] The text of this passage is difficult: *he* should be understood as *he* 荷 [to carry], while *chengfu* functions as a gloss to *heguo* and is here to be considered superfluous, although I see a particular problem in emending the words of a text which is characterized by a careless use of language. There is, moreover, the context of the chapter which clearly links the misdeeds of a person with the evil fortune of his sons and grandsons.[88]

In the second instance the text deals with the results of *chengfu* in the individual and sees them as being connected with the behaviour of the ancestors. The passage follows directly a paragraph cited earlier: "When a

80 *TPJHJ* IV, chap.72, p.295 (A).

81 Ibid., III, chap.49, pp.157 ff. (A).

82 Ibid., chap.49, p.163 (A).

83 Ibid., IV, chap.54, p.206 (A).

84 Ibid., III, chap.47, pp.131 ff. (A): "the various stages by which mankind distanced itself from the past"; *TPJHJ* VI, chap.92, p.366 (A): "there were no eclipses in high antiquity"; ibid., III, chap.36, p.43 (A) (without mentioning *gu* 古 or *sanhuang* 三皇 or any other specific time): "mankind was once so close to the primordial vapour that deterioration had no chance to set in." The *Taiping yulan* citation given by Kamitsuka, "*Taiheikyo* no shōfu to taihei," p.45, is not to be trusted considering the great number of mistaken citations of the *Taiping* texts contained in the *Taiping yulan* (see *TPJHJ*, p.735).

85 See ibid., III, chap.37, p.57 (A).

86 Ibid., chap.37, p.58 (A).

87 Ibid. IV, chap.67, p.251 (A).

88 Ibid., pp.241 ff., 246 (A). The chapter is not concerned with the misery of inheriting evil but only with the bad conduct which has created such an inheritance. It contains, for instance, the expressions "not to put a load *(fu* 負*)* on the ancestors nor a load *(fu)* on the descendents" (p.246), and "not to disgrace the ancestors and put a load *(fu)* on the descendents" (p.252); 'to put a load' is seen as the outcome of a neglect of central points of the *Taiping* moral code, in particular the protection of life and the dissemination of the doctrine.

person strives to be good but things turn out evil, this is because he receives and transmits the mistakes of the ancestors, and calamities of former and of later times will band together to hurt him. When a person does evil but things turn out well, this is because of the great merit which the ancestors assiduously assembled and which reaches out to him... . There are some men who from an early age do good but cannot take the calamity of receiving and transmitting the evils which were continuously committed by their ancestors and shut it away. They will be cut short in the prime of life without offspring, which is a great cause for pity."[89]

These passages are not transmitted in the received text but only in the *Taiping jing chao*, that is, in the Tang dynasty condensed version of the *Taiping jing*, of which nine-tenths of the original text have come down to us and which therefore covers many parts of the *Taiping jing* which are not preserved in the received text. Reliable as this version usually seems to be as far as information on the subject under discussion or on the main thesis is concerned, it is often difficult to construct the line of argument from the condensed version because necessary links may have been omitted. There are several reasons: the *Taiping jing chao* contains hardly any conversational elements, even when conversation forms the structure of the argument; difficult or clumsy passages are omitted or unreliably corrected for the sake of stylistic smoothness; the term 'Heavenly Master' is omitted or occasionally substituted by 'Divine Man' *(shenren)*, so that it is difficult to determine to which stylistic group the respective *Taiping jing* passage belongs; the *Taiping jing* text from which the *Taiping jing chao* was compiled might have been incomplete, judging by the fact that *Taiping jing* citations from extant parts of the *Taiping jing* are more comprehensive than from non-extant parts.[90]

The passage cited above seems to stem from the A- or B-part of the *Taiping jing* text, because a direct speaker is referred to a few passages later in the same division of the text.[91]

The precise meaning of the term *xianren* [ancestors] in this passage is unclear. The term is usually more closely defined when it refers to the ancestors of an individual or of a particular family. But even without such specification there are reasons to suppose that the passage deals with intra-family tradition. One reason for this is the contrast established between the transmission of evil, for which the term *chengfu* is applicable, and the transmission of merit. This contrast has no parallel elsewhere in the *Taiping jing* but the assumption that merit is handed from one generation of a family to the next is often put forward in ancient Chinese texts.[92] The *Taiping jing* is, moreover, quite in line with general attitudes when it states that this type of inheritance continues and grows over five generations and then, we must assume, begins to diminish, so that after ten generations one small cycle is complete and a new one begins.[93] E. Zürcher has collected material from early Daoist sources which shows that this belief in family legacy was common in early Daoism.[94]

89 See *TPJHJ* II, p.22 (from the *TPJC*); cf. n.55 above.

90 The number of *TPJC* pages devoted to the various divisions of the *Taiping jing* differs: I: 13 pages, II: 16 pages, III: 28 pages, IV: 18 pages, V: 15 pages, VI: 30 pages, VII: 42 pages, VIII: 19 pages, IX: 19 pages, X: missing. III, VI and VII are the most complete divisions of the modern text. Divisions I, II, VIII, IX and X are not contained in the received text. (See the Daozang *TPJC* text, vols 746–7).

91 See *TPJHJ* II, p.23 (from the *TPJC*): *wo zhi* 吾知.

92 Cf. Chen Jing, "*Taiping jing* zhong de *chengfu* baoying sixiang" [Thoughts on *chengfu* and retribution in the *Taiping jing*], *Zongjiaoxue yanjiu*, 1986, pp.35–9.

93 See *TPJHJ* II, p.22 (from the *TPJC*).

94 Zürcher, "Buddhist influence on early Taoism," *T'oung Pao* 46 (1980): 84–145, at 137; the texts Zürcher refers to mention a cycle of seven generations.

The assumption of a cycle of ten generations (following the Shuowen explanation one generation was considered to last for 30 years) is upheld by another assumption of three separate cycles of *chengfu*: one of 30,000 years of life *(sui* 歲) for emperors and kings, another of 3,000 years for officials *(zhen* 臣) and finally a last cycle of 300 years for the people *(min* 民), which would equal the cycle of ten generations mentioned above: "They all receive and transmit, one lies prostrate and the other rises without interruption, in accordance with failure and success in government."[95] The transmission of evil is particularily obvious when a foetus dies before or at birth. "In complete innocence *(wu gu* 無辜) he receives and transmits the mistakes of his ancestors."[96]

Figure 3

The Daoist ascends the clouds in a chariot drawn by two dragons. The caption gives details of the appearance of the people depicted, taking particular care to note their highly symbolic colours (see VII, chap.99 [C])

The assumption of three separate cycles in this passage signifies that even here the term *chengfu* is supposed to refer not only to transmission within the family but also to transmission beyond the family. While the figure of 300 represents the duration of a family legacy of personal merit or misconduct, the larger figures can only relate to general historical development. In any case, the evil received and transmitted by emperors and rulers is not their personal problem but becomes manifest in the suffering of their population.[97] Therefore it is often considered to be the main aim of the *Taiping* mission to abolish the evil inheritance of those who govern. According to the missionary plan of action the disciples will, once they have found a ruler who can be trusted, work to rescue him from *chengfu*.[98] The assumption of a special third cycle for the official is irrelevant to the course of the argument. Here the need for structural completeness seems to surpass the concern for meaningful detail. The *Taiping jing* contains several three-point lists which include one superfluous point to achieve the full trinity.[99] Just to have mentioned two points, that is, the ruler and the people, could have been understood as a contraposition—which had not been intended.

95 See *TPJHJ* II, p.22 (from the *TPJC*).

96 Ibid., p.23 (from the *TPJC*).

97 Ibid., VI, chap.102, pp.459 (A) et passim.

98 Ibid., pp.467 (A) et passim.

99 See, for instance, ibid., III, chap.36, p.44 (A), where clothes are added as number three to a list made up of man and woman.

The following passage adds some interesting points to the question of whether evil is transmitted within a family or by mankind in general. The subject under discussion is the evil created by digging wells, which is said to injure the earth and upset the order of nature. The disciple raises the question of why men who do not dig wells because they live next to running water can nevertheless suffer a premature death. The answer: "This is because heaven and earth are angry and this anger reaches out to a particular group having joint responsibility *(wu* 伍*)* who will jointly receive and transmit, just as the mistakes of one (nuclear) family *(jia* 家*)* will reach out to its elder and younger brothers (as established in the legal code)."[100] Here the joint responsibility of a family is introduced to explain the joint responsibility of a *wu* group, but even the *wu* cannot be taken literally as a five-family group (which might in reality consist of river-bank dwellers only) but must be seen as an image for a much larger group of people sharing the evil results of each others' doings. The passage illustrates the trans-family relevance of the term.

When no particular agent who receives or transmits evil is mentioned we may assume that the population in general is in the grips of *chengfu*, actively by evil-doing as well as passively through suffering from natural disasters, starvation and sickness.[101] Since it is the common man who transmits evil, the calamities and disasters which harass the population cannot be blamed on the ruler. This point is made with pertinacious emphasis: it is mistaken to believe that the ruler alone is responsible for *chengfu*: "Now if a government fails to achieve harmony this is not only the fault of the heaven, the earth and the ruler; the responsibility can be attributed to the misdeeds which are committed by each member of the population *(bai xing* 百姓*)*. They receive and transmit faults from one to the other, thereby making them even greater."[102]

Emperors and kings are also mentioned as the creators, receivers and transmitters of evil, that is, as the agents of *chengfu*.[103] This does not seem to be linked to their personal way of life but merely to their official function and must be seen as an expression of their token responsibility for the development of society in general.

The Termination of Chengfu

The ending of the process of receiving and transmitting an ever-increasing burden of evil is dealt with less specifically than its beginning. The termination of *chengfu* is, as Kamitsuka correctly puts it, linked to the size of the burden.[104] The term *chengfu zhi ji* 承負之極[105] is introduced to define the climax of *chengfu*. When this stage is reached the 'major disaster' *(da xiong* 大凶*)* is bound to occur[106] which will cause the end of all men, irrespective of their moral qualities. At this point the mission of the Heavenly Master is put in train, which will, with the help of its texts, bring

[100] Ibid., chap.45, p.121 (A); Wang Ming's edition fails to mark the appropriate changes of speaker.

[101] For *ren* [mankind] as an agent see ibid., chap.35, p.36 (A); chap.36, pp.46 (A), 52 (A); ibid., VI, chap.102, p.464 (from the *TPJC*), preceded by (A).

[102] Ibid., III, chap.36, p.53 (A).

[103] Ibid., VI, chap.102, p.459 (A); III, chap.42, p.90 (A). As Petersen (in "Anti-Messianism") has aptly pointed out, the rulers of the world appear mainly as victims, that is, as recipients of transmitted evil.

[104] See Kamitsuka, "*Taiheikyō* no shōfu to taihei," pp.435 ff.

[105] See *TPJHJ* VI, chap.92, p.370 (A); the writer has found no other occurrence of the term.

[106] Ibid.

about an interruption to *chengfu*. According to Kamitsuka there is a 'scientific' aspect to these notions because they make use of the numerological speculation widespread in Han dynasty cosmology, in particular the 'three sequences' *(san tong* 三統*)* in the *Hanshu* chapter on calendar-making.[107] She cites several instances of the occurrence of similar speculation in the *Taiping* texts,[108] or more precisely, she cites passages in the texts which refer to cycles—the yearly cycle of nature,[109] the cycle of family lineage,[110] the human life cycle,[111] and also smaller and larger calendrical cycles.[112] There is also the term 'primordial beginning'[113] from which all cycles are supposed to have started and there is the notion that a new big cycle is now *(jin zhe* 今者*)*[114] about to begin. The *Taiping* texts, however, are generally vague on the length and on the classification of the various cycles. The term *chengfu* does not occur in the context of these cosmological cycles,[115] while the cycles mentioned for *chengfu* use different figures, the largest being said to last for 30,000 years.[116] Nevertheless it would seem that Kamitsuka is right to suggest that the 'high-point of *chengfu*' can be seen to coincide with the end of a cosmological cycle and consequently the beginning of a new one.

As opposed to Kamitsuka, Petersen argues from the assumption that the same chapter 92 (A) which is at the basis of Kamitsuka's account is mainly a critique of the cyclical theory of disasters. Petersen claims that the numerologically-based theory of cyclical development is presented in chapter 92 (as elsewhere in the A-body of texts) as a doctrine to be refuted, or at least to be refuted in some essential details. The most important of these details is the proposed automatic structure of change implied in any cyclical theory. The *Taiping* texts are little concerned with the necessity or automatic arrival of a new cycle but deal at length with human preparations for its arrival; there is a moral and practical rather than a cosmological bias. The argument is that even with a new cycle ahead changes will only take place through social and moral reform. The logical contradiction this entails did not escape the disciple. He questions the Master at one point as to how a small moral transgression can make much difference, now that the arrival of the impact of *taiping* is imminent. The Master replies in fury that such a small transgression will make all the difference.[117] This way of thinking is in line with the *Taiping jing*'s explanation of eclipses of the sun and the moon, which are said to be completely man-made and necessitated only by moral causes.[118]

To abolish *chengfu* is described as part-and-parcel of the general success of the missionary movement set in motion by the Heavenly Master, which contains various practical measures: the distribution of texts, the education and training of disciples, and finally the disciples' contact with leading political figures. Once this contact has been established the disciples are expected to press for socio-political reforms in line with the programme developed in the *Taiping jing* : the structuring of political transparency and communication, environmental protection, an increase in the birthrate, and

[107] The *san tong*, that is, the 'three sequences' (or 'reigns', 'cycles') of heaven, earth and man, are a basic concept of Han cosmology (cf. Tjan Tjoe Som, *Po Hu T'ung* [Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1949], p.549, or W. Eberhard, "Beiträge zur kosmologischen Spekulation Chinas in der Han-Zeit" (1933), repr. in W. Eberhard, *Sternkunde und Weltbild im alten China* (Taipei: Chinese Materials and Research Aids Service Center, 1970), pp.11–110, at 79) and are referred to frequently in the *Taiping* texts, e.g. *TPJHJ*, chap.92, p.373 (A) or chap.119, p.681 (A), in a general cosmological sense without specific recourse to its calendrical function.

[108] See Kamitsuka, "*Taiheikyō* no shōfu to taihei," p.435.

[109] *TPJHJ* III, chap.50, p.178 (C); chap.38, p.62 (A).

[110] Ibid., chap.50, p.182 (C).

[111] Ibid., VI, chap.112, p.463 (C); chap.50, p.177 (C).

[112] Ibid., chap.93, p.390 (A) (mentioning the *jiazi* year as 'beginning' [*chushi* 初始]); chap.42, p.96 (A); chap.65, p.227 (A).

[113] Ibid., VII, chap.119, p.678 (A).

[114] Ibid., pp.676, 677 (A).

[115] Ibid., chap.119.

[116] Ibid., II, p.22 (from the *TPJC*).

[117] Ibid., III, chap.35, p.34 (A).

[118] See B. Hendrischke, "How the Celestial Master proves heaven reliable," in *Religion und Philosophie in Ostasien. Festschrift für Hans Steiniger*, ed. G. Naundorf, K.H. Pohl and H.H. Schmidt (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1985), pp.76–86, at 79 ff.

the general protection and creation of life. In implementing this programme the ruler should follow 'the Heavenly scripture' and if he is successful in terminating *chengfu* this will, in turn, prove the scripture right.[119] So the termination of evil is seen to be linked to the use of 'phrases',[120] 'texts'[121] or 'the Heavenly scripture';[122] it is never depicted as an isolated event but as concomitant with the arrival of the influence *(qi)* of 'general peace' *(taiping)*,[123] which above all else will bring about a state of harmony and order.

To terminate *chengfu* is the task of the disciples of the Master, but men of other categories are also mentioned. According to a rather cryptic passage there are nine grades of men charged with bringing to an end the reception and transmission of the calamities from ten-thousand generations of previous kings. These nine grades encompass the whole of society, from the divine, spirit-like man at the top who feeds on nothing but breath *(qi)*, to the serf at the bottom.[124]

From the above it is clear that the termination of evil is a communal affair. The disciples will obtain salvation for the community as a whole if the community follows the moral code of the Heavenly Master. There is only one instance in the A body of texts where the termination of *chengfu* is seen from a different angle. The text is difficult and may be ambiguous. One possible interpretation is contained in the following *Taiping jing chao* version of the text: "If you wish to abolish the punishment of *chengfu* there is nothing better than to guard the One *(shouyi)*. When you continue to guard the One, Heaven will have pity on you." 'Guarding the One' is a method of meditation which is elaborated upon in the *Taiping jing* and also occurs in the *Baopuzi*.[125] The abolition of evil can reasonably be linked to meditation only on the assumption that salvation from evil is a personal matter sought by individuals for their own sake. The transmitted text contains no other passages which link the two terms. In another passage of the *Taiping* corpus, where the many advantages of guarding the One are depicted, *chengfu* is not mentioned as being influenced by *shouyi* although the term *chengfu* occurs in the passage.[126]

It seems me that the contradiction between abolishing *chengfu* by meditation on the one hand and by missionary activity and moral righteousness on the other is pronounced enough to signify basic textual divisions. The term *shouyi* refers to a full and central Daoist tradition, which I would briefly like to describe because the term, together with *taiping* (whose background in Han philosophy is well established[127]) and *chengfu*, can be said to be a characteristic concept of the *Taiping* corpus. There is some external evidence for the fact that the term was of particular importance to the *Taiping* movement:

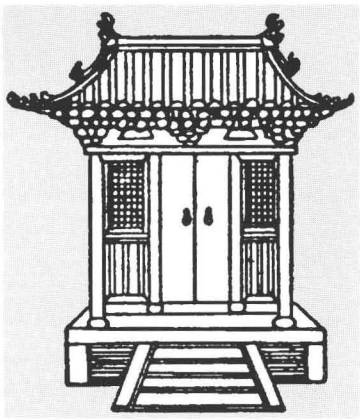


Figure 4

The "Abode of the Void," introduced in Taiping jing *VII, chap.103 (C) as the place from which the Daoist sets out on his spiritual journey*

119 *TPJHJ* III, chap.42, p.92 (A).

120 Ibid., VI, chap.96, p.416 (A).

121 Ibid., chap.93, p.393 (A).

122 Ibid., IV, chap.66, p.238 (A).

123 Ibid., III, chap.48, p.148 (A).

124 Ibid., chap.42, p.90 (A).

125 The term *shouyi* has been discussed briefly by Kaltenmark, "Ideology," pp.39 and 41 ff., and at more length by Yoshioka Yoshitoyo, "*Taiheikyō* no shuitsu shisō" [Thoughts on Guarding the One in the *Taiping jing*], in Yamazaki Sensei Taikan Kinenkai, ed., *Tōyō shigaku ronshū* [Essays on East Asian History] Tokyo: Taian, 1967), pp.491–500, and by L. Kohn, "Guarding the One: concentrative meditation in Taoism," in *Taoist meditation and longevity techniques*, ed. L. Kohn, Michigan Monographs in Chinese Studies, no.61 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1989), pp.125–58. The brief paper by Ding Yizhuang and Liu Dongmei ("*Taiping jing zhong 'shouyi' qianshi*" [Explanation of the term *shouyi* in the *Taiping jing*], *Zongjiaoxue yanjiu* 2 [1986]: 67–74) consists of a superficial collection of some material on the term and on other purification and concentration techniques in the *Taiping* corpus; the term *shouyi* is seen as containing dietary and breathing excercises as well as meditation techniques, and the *Taiping jing shengjun mizhi* (see n.139 below) is treated as if it were part of the *Taiping jing*.

126 See *TPJHJ* VI, chap.96, p.412 (A): Thanks to *shouyi* a man's knowledge of good and evil will be complete, he will succeed in government, he will control his internal spirits, /OVER

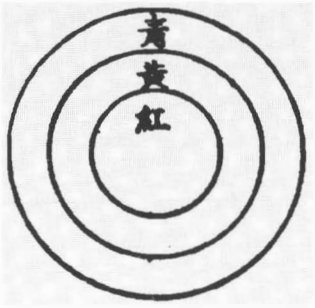


Figure 5
One possible arrangement of the colours envisaged in guarding the One (from VII, chap.103 [C]), where the spectrum ranges from red to blue-green. This differs slightly from the spectrum containing red, white and blue-green mentioned on p.21

firstly, in commenting on the Laozi term *baoyi* 抱一[toembrace the One] the *Xiang'er* uses the term *shouyi* as a translation,[128] and secondly, the term occurs in Xiang Kai's memorial as a description of the Buddha's frame of mind.[129] The *Taiping jing* explicitly states that the term *shouyi* is central to its doctrine: "If there is disbelief in my text you should give evidence in your teachings that it is in agreement with the old as well as the modern texts on *shouyi*. On comparison these texts will provide proof for one another."[130] A great promise is linked to performing the guarding of the One, in the *Taiping* corpus as well as in many previous and later Daoist writings: "If you know about the guarding of the One, all ten-thousand affairs will reach their fruition."[131]

The interpretation of the term *shouyi* is obviously linked to the wide variety of meanings of *yi*, the One. To go back to the *Taiping jing chao* passage cited above: ". . . when you continue to guard the One, Heaven will have pity on you. The One is the rule of Heaven and the root of all ten-thousand beings. If you keep thinking of their root, you will be floating towards their branches."[132] The cosmological position of the term was well presented in pre-Han philosophical texts.[133] The following *Taiping jing* passage points to the high cosmological ranking of the One, using the three-in-one structure which often marks the concept of coming into being: "The three vapours combined in one are the spiritual root. One is the corporeal essence *(jing* 精*)*, another one is spirit, the third one is vapour: these three combined in one position *(yi wei* 一位*)* are the basic vapour of heaven, earth and men."[134]

However, the *Taiping jing* rarely uses the term yi on its own. Definitions of the term are commonly linked to its function of 'being guarded', as, for instance, in the following passage: "Why should you guard the One in your thoughts? One is the first of all numbers, One is the Dao of life, from the One the primordial vapour arises, One is the mainstay of Heaven."[135] So the term 'One' is to be understood by its function: "Concerning the One, the doctrine put forward here must start exactly from the guarding of the One: when the guarding of the One is not set aside, a man will daily become more illumined."[136] The same emphasis on the functional relevance of the One is manifest in the *Baopuzi* passage which most scholars have turned to in order to explain the term *shouyi*;[137] Ge Hong states that to guard the 'Mysterious One' *(xuanyi* 玄一*)* will enable the disciple to divide himself into different personages, while the more difficult method of preserving the 'True One', *(zhenyi* 真一*)* will afford him protection against all harmful influences; and the text gives a list of the respective techniques required for guarding the different aspects of the One.

Transplanted into the realm of physiological techniques the life-giving impact of the One manifests itself in longevity practices: "The essential

/he will transcend the world. See also ibid., p.410, where the Celestial Master says that "his text" *(wo wen* 吾文*)*, which is in agreement with texts on *shouyi*, will abolish *chengfu*. However, this does not mean that *shouyi* is seen as instrumental in abolishing *chengfu*.

127 Cf. Eichhorn, "Tai-p'ing Religion."

128 See Rao Zongyi, *Laozi Xiang'er zhu jiaojian* [Edition of the *Xiang'er* commentary to the *Laozi*] (Hong Kong: Tong Nam, 1956), p.13 (*Laozi* 10).

129 See *Hou Hanshu*, 30B, p.1082.

130 *TPJHJ* VI, chap.96, p.410 (A).

131 Ibid., chap.92, p.369 (A) *(zi zhi shouyi, wanshi bi* 子知守一萬事畢*)*; cf. the similar wording in the *Taiping jing shengjun mizhi*, *TPJHJ*, p.740: "the affairs will be completed of their own accord," and Kohn, "Guarding the One," p.131, who cites the saying in the more impressive form given by *Zhuangzi* 29 and elsewhere: *Zhi shouyi, wanshi bi*.

132 See *TPJHJ*, chap.37, p.60 (A), from a *TPJC* citation not transmitted in the received text.

133 Cf. Kohn, "Guarding the One," pp.127 ff., for a collection of material on the term *yi* which is useful, although structured by rather haphazard criteria and based on dubious data (for instance, p.127: "According to the *Taiping jing*. . . of the second century AD") with little sense of historical sequence.

134 See *TPJC* citation, *TPJHJ*,, p.728.

135 *TPJHJ* III, chap.37, p.60 (A).

136 See ibid., chap.39, p.64 (A); this is an attempted explanation of the use of the character *yi* 'one' in the cryptic "Declaration" *TPJHJ* III, chap.38, p.62; cf. the paraphrase by Kaltenmark, "Ideology," p.39.

teachings *(dao)* in former times as well as today all say that by guarding the One you can exist for a long time without getting old. When a man knows how to guard the One this is called the Dao without limit *(wuji zhi dao* 無極之道*)*. Man has one body which must be united with corporeal essences and spirit. The external figure presides over death; corporeal essences and spirit preside over life. When they are constantly united happiness prevails; when they depart, unhappiness prevails. Without corporeal essences and spirit there is death, with corporeal essences and spirit there is life. From their constant union you become one and can exist long. When you continuously damage corporeal essences and spirit they depart, dissolve and cannot be collected in your body but are caused to travel about following man's thoughts. Therefore the wise man will teach this guarding of the One which means that you should guard the one body. . . . To guard the One is truly to unite into One. Corporeal essences and spirit are all sufficient when man is alive. When he guards them so that they will not dissolve he can then transcend this world, become father and mother of a good people, meet with the ruler of Great Peace, and be beloved by all deities."[138]

The method described so far amounts to a quietist style of life. But this was not the full sense of *shouyi* and it is not clear whether the specific religious meaning of the term, that is, a certain type of meditation, was also implied in the passages cited above. There is only one *Taiping jing* passage, transmitted in the *Taiping jing chao*, where the meditation practice of *shouyi* is described. It consists of colour-visualizing, starting with red, turning to white and later to green until it becomes pervasive and fills one's interior with light which shines like the sun.[139]

There can be no doubt that *shouyi* was an integral part of the *Taiping* texts. It was so basic that it underwent the same rigidly formalistic process of relativization which is so typical of many arguments in the *Taiping jing*: distinctions were set up between the guarding of the One by a great, a medium and a small man[140] or by a great, medium and small worthy.[141] There is also the ordering from one to five, which seems to document how the authors fell into the trap laid by their own system of correspondences in that this usage of *shouyi* would appear not to conform with the established meaning of the term: he who preserves the One will, it is asserted, have Heavenly deities at his side; if the two, it is those of the earth; if he preserves the three he will be helped by human demons; and if he preserves the four or five he will only have the protection issued by various beings which will bring nothing but unhappiness.[142]

Concerning the history of the term,[143] it must be remembered that it became very prominent in Maoshan Daoism, so we must expect the editors of the sixth-century text to have taken great interest in it. Unfortunately, the passages focusing on *shouyi* are all transmitted in *Taiping jing chao* citations only and are therefore difficult to identify with textual layers. The increasing prominence of the term in the sense of a meditation technique in the Daoist as well as in the Buddhist tradition[144] could serve as a clue to explain why

137 See ibid., p.38; Yoshioka, "Shuitsu shisō," p.496; Kohn, "Taoist meditation," p.140 ff.; and *Baopuzi* 18.

138 See *TPJC* citation, *TPJHJ*, p.716. The passage contains elements of dialogue, but no specific A-elements. The promise of transcendence *(du shi* 度世*)* has parallels elsewhere (e.g. *TPJHJ*, chap.90, p.342 [A]).

139 See *TPJC* in *TPJHJ*, pp.15 ff. as analysed by Kaltenmark, "Ideology," p.42, and Kohn, "Taoist meditation," p.41. The term occurs frequently in the *Taiping jing shengjun mizhi*, a short independent text which might, however, be of a similar date to the *TPJC*, dealing only with a few topics, prominent among them the term *shouyi*. Since biographical sources mention that the *TPJC*'s author Lüqiu Fangyuan took great interest in this term, it has been suggested (*TPJHJ*, Preface by Wang Ming, p.16) that he wrote the *Mizhi*. The *Taiping jing* proper gives scarcely any details on how *shouyi* can be achieved, while in the *Taiping jing shengjun mizhi* there are detailed descriptions of the 'method' *(fa* 法*)* of *shouyi*: The method is preconditioned by a quietist style of life (no concern about wealth or poverty [p.742]; non-activity [p.741]) and a great concern for the internal world of one's body, where all deities are kept in a cooperative mood (p.742) by the method of *shouyi*: "The method of guarding the One keeps all deities in charge, is the root of man's goodness, is the means to drive away unhappiness and the gate to reach happiness. To guard the One is to be master over the holy vessel (an image for all under Heaven, see *Laozi* 29)" (p.742). On *shouyi* meditation the *Mizhi* says: "The method of guarding the light of the One: Shut the doors to all four directions with complete illumination in your belly. This is the light of the great harmony (usually the term for the harmony between Yin and Yang) and the doctrine of great obedience (to nature or Heaven)" (*TPJHJ*, p.740).

140 See *TPJHJ* VI, chap.96, p.410 (A).

141 Ibid., p.412 (A).

142 *TPJHJ*, p.13 (from the *TPJC*).

143 Tang Yongtong (in, e.g., *Han Wei Liang Jin Nanbei chao Fojiao shi* [The history of Buddhism during the Han, Wei, the two Jin, and the Southern and Northern dynasties], 2 vols [reprint ed., Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1983], 2: 77 ff.) assumed that the term /OVER

/originated with Buddhism, which Rao Zongyi (*Laozi Xiang'er*, p.65) attempted to refute by demonstrating the roots of the term in the *Laozi* and in the *Zhuangzi* (Harvard-Yenjing Concordance, 27, 11, 39). Tang's assumption also disagrees with Zürcher's general finding concerning early Daoist loans: that Daoism was not prone to borrow in fields where it had developed insights of its own ("Early Taoism," p.142), as it certainly had in the field of *shouyi*, or meditation practices. Yoshioka, "Shuitsu shisō," p.497, points out that some of the practices mentioned in the *Mizhi* (see *TPJHJ*, p.740) are in fact the 'contemplation of the wall' *(bi guan* 壁觀*)*, for which Bo He 帛和 became famous (cf. his *Shenxian zhuan* biography, chap.7). Yoshioka, however, does not draw attention to the possible historical relevance of his argument: Bo He was one of the founders of the Daoist religion with an influential school of his own (cf. Chen Guofu, *Daozang yuanliu kao* [Examination of the origins of the Daoist Canon] (reprint ed., Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1963), pp.71 ff.) whose links with the *Taiping qingling shu* are an established fact of hagiography in that he was said to have been teacher to Gan Ji (cf. two citations from a lost *Shenxian zhuan* biography of Gan Ji [personal communication of B. Penny] in the *Sandong zhunang*, chap.1, pp.7a ff. [K. Schipper, *Concordance du Tao-tsang* (Paris: Ecole Francaise d'Extreme-Orient, 1975), no.780)] and in the *Xianyuan bianzhu* B:13b [Schipper, *Concordance*, no.330]), the supposed author of the *Taiping qingling shu*. The term was taken up by Ge Hong (cf. *Baopuzi, Neibian*, chap.18) and it did play an important role in Tao Hongjing's school of Daoism; Yoshioka, ("Shuitsu shisō," p.500) convincingly suggests its occurrence in the *Taiping jing* might have been one of the stimuli for the re-edition of the text by Tao Hongjing's disciples.

144 Cf. D.W. Chappell, "The teachings of the fourth Ch'an patriarch Tao-hsin (580–651)," in W. Lai and L.R. Lancaster, *Early Ch'an in China and Tibet* (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1983), pp.89–130, at 96 ff. In early Buddhist texts the homophone 'to guard the mind' was used to translate the central concept *dhyana (chan* 禪*)*.

145 See *TPJHJ* VII, chap.111, pp.561 ff. (B).

146 Ibid., pp.550, 551, 561 (all B).

some *Taiping* texts make an attempt to link it to the other prominent Heavenly Master concept—*chengfu*. To return to the original argument: the attempt to link the concepts *chengfu* and *shouyi*, contradictory though they might be, could well be symptomatic of the composition of much of the textual corpus in combining the quest for individual happiness with attempts at social reform.

Differences of Meaning in Textual Layers A and B

Disregarding the above-mentioned A-passage linking the termination of *chengfu* to meditation, the A-type *Taiping* texts use the term overwhelmingly to point to communal salvation from evil. However, in the B-texts *chengfu* is used to point to an individual's afflictions, to the evil endangering his own life and after-life. An adept is depicted who has spent years practising Daoist techniques and moral behaviour, for instance loyalty and piety, and who has now succeeded in obtaining an audience with the Heavenly Lord *(tianjun)* to abolish the last remaining difficulties on his way to immortality. The issue of chengfu occurs several times in these talks. The adept has to make sure that this load is taken from him, otherwise he would be permitted neither to complete his full life on earth[145] nor to ascend to Heaven. The proper method used to rid himself of evil is *zi ze* 自責 ['self-accusation'],[146] a standard procedure in early religious ritual.[147] The adept is advised to use the same method to rid himself of the evil received and transmitted by his ancestors as he uses it to rid himself of the impact of his own misdeeds. That is, the transmission seems to be an intra-family affair.[148] The Heavenly Lord will then permit the successful believer to join the immortals by issuing a decree to minor deities to free him of his load of *chengfu*.[149] So the termination of evil is achieved for the individual believer instead of for mankind, and is the work not of human beings but of deities or spirits *(shen)*, which are discussed altogether much more frequently in the B than in the A body of texts. They are said to have been obliged by Heaven to take charge of terminating *chengfu*.[150] The B body of texts abounds with such descriptions of religio-bureaucratic procedures. Consequently, in B the process of abolishing evil is depicted as a gradual and time-consuming one,[151] quite befitting bureaucratic conduct.

There is not enough textual material to go into more detail concerning the use of the term in B-texts; no information has, for instance, been preserved concerning the time when *chengfu* originated, or perhaps no such information was ventured in the first place because the term was interpreted as an element of personal history only. The term is used interchangeably with 'evil deeds': for instance, deities are said to keep an account of *chengfu* as they do of a man's merits and failures.[152]

From these examples it is clear that there is no single concept of *chengfu* used consistently throughout the *Taiping* texts but that we can recognize an A- and a B-text concept. These two concepts are not on an equal footing. The concept contained in A is clearly original and crucial for the politico-religious doctrine expressed in the A-type texts, while the B-texts' attempt to adjust *chengfu* to individualist aims turns it into a non-specific, rather superfluous term, which does not surpass the notions of evil deeds or evil lineage and could easily be substituted by any of these terms. This alone might suggest that the concept was invented and developed by the A-text authors and only adopted into the B-texts to create a link with the main Taiping tradition.

There is only one chapter transmitted in the modern text which deals explicitly with the term *chengfu*. I would like to summarize my description of the way the term is used in the Taiping corpus of texts by briefly paraphrasing this chapter. It mentions five instances in the process of receiving and transmitting evil:

1. The first instance deals with the results of *chengfu*: When bad harvests cause the people to starve one might assume that the cause lies with the earth. This assumption is false. Although the damage to the growing plants stems from the earth, the real cause lies with human misbehaviour.[153]
2. The second instance deals with the origin of *chengfu*: "Now let us suppose that one master instructs ten disciples, that this master's instructions are false and untrue, and that the ten disciples will again each instruct ten persons; there will already be a hundred men giving false instructions. If one hundred men in their turn each give false instructions to ten men there will be a thousand men giving false instructions."[154] False teachings thus accumulating will lead to wicked behaviour and to the establishment of false customs. The speaker concludes that later generations cannot be blamed for the results of these errors.
3. Another sort of error is spread by Nostradamus-type individuals, whose vivid performance causes gossip about imminent disaster to be spread among the population. Such gossip is detrimental to the people's patterns of behaviour and has long-term consequences. This again is the fault of the seer and his naïve listeners, not of later generations. Their only fault arises when they wrongly blame their contemporaries for calamities which are in reality caused by earlier generations.[155]
4. A huge tree is introduced as a simile for the connection between causes and outcome in the process of *chengfu*. The tree is described as giving shade to everyone beneath its branches. When the tree loses its leaves and branches and deprives men of its protection the fault lies with the roots only and not with the leaves and branches, just as the blame for evil and calamities lies with the ancestors and not with the present generation.[156]
5. Diseases are a common result of *chengfu*. When, for instance, the poisonous vapour hidden away in the southern mountains emerges and

147 Cf. H. Maspero, *Le Taoisme* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1967), pp.160 ff.

148 See, for instance, *TPJHJ* VII, chap.110, p.536. The material for this paragraph stems from several consecutive passages (chaps 110–11 of division VII), which were closely analysed by Takahashi in "Kaiwatai." Takahashi has divided the text into passages with conversational elements and essay-type passages and sees a distinctive content and background for both. His textual analysis is very useful and his distribution of the text amongst three speakers and one narrator seems appropriate, but his assumption concerning the basic difference between the conversational and the essay elements of these two chapters is difficult to follow; cf. also B. Penny's remarks (in "Fate calculation") on the subject. Judging by the arguments presented in Takahashi's paper the doctrinal differences seem to be minute and the stylistic similarities impressive, in particular the use of *wei* throughout chaps 110–11.

149 See Takahashi, "*Taibeikyō* no kaiwatai," p. 248, and *TPJHJ* VII, chap.110, p.534, and chap.111, p.561 (both B).

150 Ibid., VI, chap.110, p.534 (B).

151 Ibid., VII, chap.111, p.561 (B) and chap.112, p.579 (B).

152 Ibid.

153 Ibid., III, chap.37, p.58 (A).

154 Ibid.

155 Ibid.

156 Ibid., pp.58 ff. (A).

157 Cf. Maspero, *Le Taoisme*, p.154.

158 This again puts the *Taiping* texts into the social context of messianic movements from the late Han period onwards. On the *Taiping jing*'s explanation of epidemics see Wei Qipeng, "*Taiping jing* yu Dong Han yixue" [The *Taiping jing* and Eastern Han medicine], *Shijie zongjiao yanjiu*, 1981, no.1, pp.101–9, at 102.

159 *TPJHJ* VII, chap.114, p.620 (B).

causes disease, this is not the fault of the person who falls sick. To blame the sick man for his illness angers Heaven. This is an argument against the faith-healing practices of the Heavenly Master Sect which treated the sick as criminals until they were healed.[157] It is also in blatant contradiction to the demand for self-accusation put forward in the B-texts of the *Taiping jing* mentioned above. *Chengfu*, however, is not the only doctrine which the *Taiping* corpus expounds to explain how diseases and, in particular, epidemics originate and how they can be stopped. The topic is frequently dealt with in the texts as if it had been of great interest to the listeners concerned.[158] The B-texts mention spirits *(shen)* as the cause of epidemics.[159]

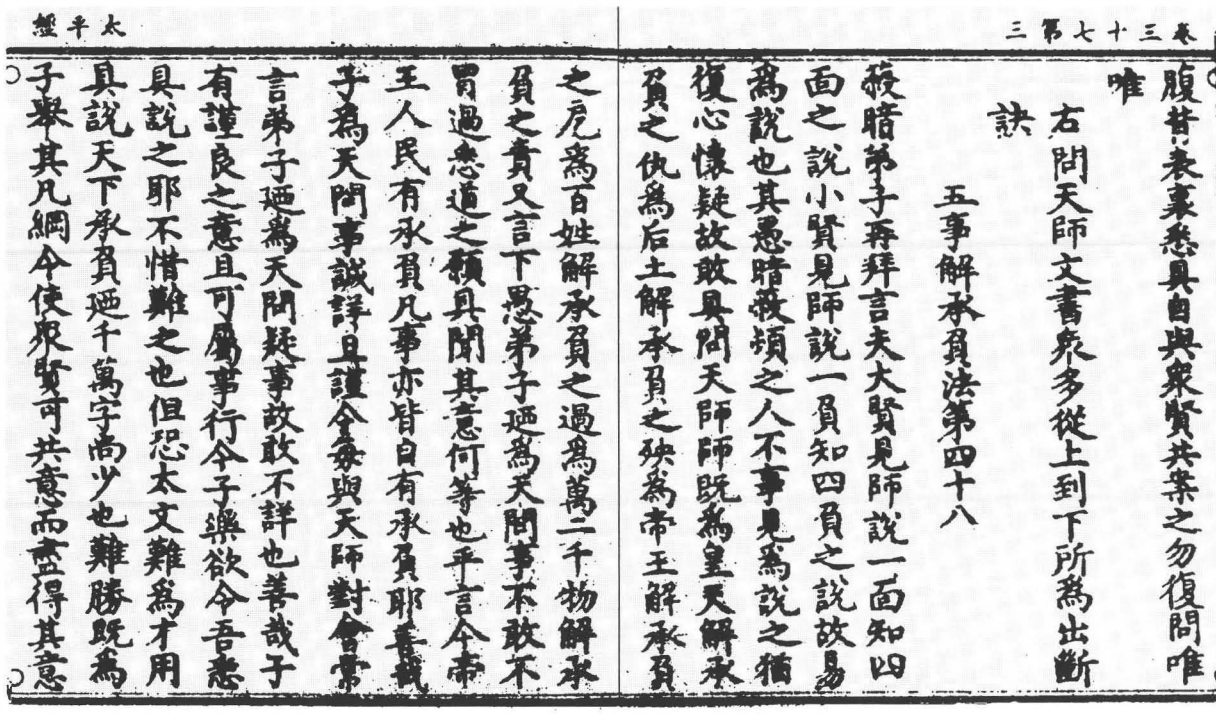


Figure 6
Dialogue between Heavenly Master and True Man, introducing five instances of receiving and transmitting evil

Up to this point the use of the term *chengfu* in this chapter follows the same direction as that in the bulk of A-texts: evil and calamities stem from errors committed by men in the past. Mankind suffers from these calamities, irrespective of the individual's personal merit or misconduct. Psychological concern is given special emphasis and men are strictly warned of the cosmic consequences of making false accusations against their contemporaries, which is in line with other A-text passages. However, the complexity of the situation is laid out in unusual detail:

> The ignorant know no better than to find fault with the rulers of their time and to make accusations against their contemporaries. So how should they in turn not suffer from even more resentment? The world is completely evil but has no way to learn of it. Even if a single emperor or king had the virtue of ten-thousand

> men his faculties would be only what they are. So what could he do? Concerning the ways of men nowadays, how can they find a solution? When food is prepared one wishes to eat; however, the sick come to death unable to eat. How can there be any solution? When in intercourse you reach the climax, you will look forward to having sons and grandsons; you might bring offerings to the deities and beg for happiness but still be unable to have children. How can there be any solution?[160]

The images used here convey an utter despair which defies the moral or political recipes suggested in other A-texts. Here consolation is destined to be religious and is envisaged in the following stages: men will give up their false accusations and calm down; Heaven will then show pity; it will allow the primordial vapour (which is often credited with the creation of the world) to descend. Men should observe this process by guarding the One (as described above[161]) in calm meditation without further involvement.

This chapter of the *Taiping jing* offers a solution for the termination of evil which is at odds with the main line of A-text reasoning. No role is reserved either for any sacred scripture nor for political, moral or administrative solutions. It is also at odds with the solution offered in the B body of texts, in that the divine bureaucracy is not involved and accusations of any sort are seen as counterproductive. This can be taken as just another proof of the fact that the bulk of A-type texts is heterogeneous even in its treatment of leading doctrines.[162]

160 Ibid., III, chap.37, p.60 (A).

161 Ibid.

162 There are conflicting, or at least competing, doctrines on a number of issues, for instance on the origin and distribution of texts (originating from the Heavenly Master, from the assembled wisdom of past and present, or from the people), on the origin of wealth and poverty (through individual effort or otherwise), and on the means to prolong life and avoid death.

The Historical Context of the Concept of Chengfu

Many *Taiping jing* scholars have not troubled themselves to describe the term *chengfu*, as they regard it as self-explanatory.[163] However, they have given some thought to its historical context.

Kamitsuka has argued convincingly that the concept of *chengfu* should be understood in relation to the theory of the origin of catastrophies which held much of Chinese intellectual life under its sway during the Han dynasty and after.[164] The term certainly stemmed from the same ideological roots and could be termed a modification or, to follow Petersen,[165] a criticism of the traditional disaster theory. This critique introduced changes in the social function of the theory. While Dong Zhongshu's or the traditional theory could be referred to in all minor and major instances of political decision-making, the *chengfu* theory with its general, unspecific explanation for the occurrence of disasters was ill-suited as a tool for routine government but rather befitted a basic moral and religious reform movement. Kamitsuka has also pointed to the fact that the term has a communal as well as an individual aspect, but she failed to link these two diverse aspects to the respective layers of the corpus.

It seems obvious to me that Kamitsuka has pointed to the roots of the term, and in fact to the roots of the *Taiping* doctrine. Nevertheless, there were

163 See Zürcher, "Early Taoism," p.136: ". . . the well-known Taoist belief in *ch'eng-fu*."

164 Kamitsuka, "*Taiheikyō* no *shōfu* to *taihei*," pp.57 ff.

165 Petersen, "Anti-Messianism," pp.33 ff.

other influences and these should be analysed in detail. The question has been raised as to whether Buddhist thought had an impact on the formulation of the concept of *chengfu*. This question has often been narrowed down, perhaps unduly, to the problem of whether the term can be interpreted and understood within the limits of the Chinese tradition only. Koyanagi Shigeta, one of the grand old masters of Japanese Sinology, saw *chengfu* as being of Chinese origin, taking its place in the tradition of a family unit, and thereby similar to the tradition of family merit and demerit as described in the *Yijing* 易經.[166] About forty years later this same interpretation was repeated by Takahashi, but without giving Koyanagi due credit for its formulation.[167]

In the People's Republic the socio-political aspect of the term has received more scholarly attention than its religious aspect. Chen Jing has recently followed this general trend by isolating the text from its religious background and stressing the political aspect of a *chengfu*-type transmission of evil. He claimed that it was in opposition to previous Chinese or contemporary Buddhist ideas.[168] He saw the term as taking up a discussion of positions put forward in the Yijing[169] and by pre-Han and Han philosophers, in particular as an answer to Wang Chong's critique of the ancient belief that destiny punishes the evil and rewards the good.[170] By listing well-known cases of virtuous and righteous but nevertheless unfortunate men, Wang Chong had attempted to prove that destiny strikes a person from without regardless of the nature of his own deeds. This outside influence is, if we follow Chen Jing, what the *Taiping jing* terms *chengfu*. Tang Yijie argued along similar lines. He pointed to the contrast between the family-centered Chinese theory of retribution and the Buddhist belief in reincarnation. The Chinese theory he called almost scientific because it did not, as he saw it, involve any after-life,[171] a thought which is quite valid in that there is indeed a contradiction between, on the one hand, leaving the evil deeds to future generations of mankind or descendents, and, on the other hand, personally suffering the evil consequences in a subterrestial after-life.

There are, however, good reasons for constructing some connection between the Daoist and the Buddhist concept, in spite of the fact that karma is supposed to be carried by one and the same person into future existences, while *chengfu* is handed down to all members of future generations.[172] Tang Yongtong saw a common root in *chengfu* and karma because they both establish a link of merit or misconduct between one generation and the next.[173] Ofuchi Ninji also saw a Buddhist connection and explained the Daoist term as an attempt to sinicize a problem raised by Buddhist thought.[174]

So in spite of the obvious distance between the two concepts, the fact remains that they both suggest answers to one common human problem: it could well be that the one proposition stimulated the formulation of a concurring proposition concerning the same problem. We should not take it for granted that intellectual influence can become manifest only in loans

166 Koyanagi Shigeta, *Tōyō shisō no kenkyū* [Studies on East Asian thought] (Tokyo: Rinhoku Shoten, 1942), pp.448 ff.

167 See Takahashi Tadahiko, "*Taibeikyō* no shisō no shakaiteki sokumen" [Social bias in the thought of the *Taiping jing*], *Tōyō bunka kenkyūjo kiyō* 100 (1986): 251.

168 Chen Jing, "*Chengfu* baoying sixiang" [Thoughts on *chengfu* and retribution], *Zongjiaozue yanjiu* 1986, no. 3, pp.35–9.

169 See *Yijing*, "Kun wan yan," in Yuan Ruan, ed., *Shisanjing zhushu* [Commentaries to the Thirteen Classics] (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1979), p.19a.

170 See *Lun Heng*, "Ming yi," in Guoxue Zhengli She, ed., *Juzi jicheng* [Collection of philosophical texts] (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1954), pp.11, 13.

171 Tang Yijie, *Wei Jin Nanbei chao shiqi de Daojiao* [Daoism during the period of the Wei and Jin and the Northern and Southern dynasties] (Xian: Shenxi Shifandaxue Chubanshe, 1987); chap. 13 is entitled "The theory of *chengfu* and the theory of Samsara" (pp.333–44). The book follows certain Chinese academic trends which in some fields became dominant during the last decades of the Mao era, one of which was to ignore foreign scholarship. The author gives, for example, a new transcription of the Dunhuang *Taiping* manuscript (pp.359–89) without even mentioning Yoshioka's quite reliable transcription. He jumps into rash evaluations of his material concerning its 'progressiveness' or 'backwardness', and ignores material which contradicts these evaluations, for instance, the many passages in the *Taiping* corpus which deal with the problems of after-life.

172 Cf. Tang Yongtong, *Wang ri za gao* [Miscellaneous manuscripts of bygone days] (Beijing: Xinhua Shudian, 1963), pp.62 ff.

173 Tang Yongtong, *Han Wei Liang Jin Nanbei chao Fojiao shi*, p.77 ff.

174 See Ofuchi, "*Taibeikyō* no shisō," pp. 154 ff.

175 Zürcher, "Early Taoism," p.121.

176 Ibid., p.88.

177 *Hou Hanshu*, 30B, p.1082.

178 Tang Yijie, *Wei Jin Nanbei chao*, p.337, citing *TPJHJ* IV, chap.67, p.241 (and see also p.249).

179 Takahashi, "Shakaiteki sokumen," pp.249–84, at 251 ff.; see, for instance, "A family/OVER

and imitations; but it should also be kept in mind that the problem of retribution was a strong point in Buddhist doctrine, as has been pointed out by Erik Zürcher,[175] and that it is reasonable to see Daoist teachings on this topic as a response to Buddhist propositions. Buddhist influence on the discussion of the subject of retribution could well have been pervasive.[176] If one chooses to pursue the legend of a late Han *Taiping jing*, the chronological and geographical situation of the authors of such a text would have allowed for certain contacts, in that Langye came very early under the influence of Buddhism, as can be seen from the mention of Sakyamuni in Xiang Kai's memorial of 166 AD.[177]

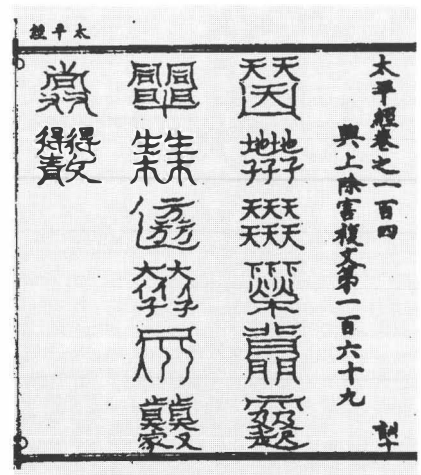


Figure 7
This is an illustration of fu *characters, taken from the* Daozang *edition of the* Taiping jing, *chap.104, p.1a*

As opposed to the textual evidence presented by Petersen and in this paper, there has been a broad agreement amongst scholars who mention the term *chengfu* that the transmission of evil takes place within the family. Tang Yijie explains that evil deeds which were not punished in a person's lifetime would be transmitted to his own descendents.[178] Takahashi Tadahiko has collected much evidence for the transmission of evil and of merit from ancestors to descendents, because this coincided with his basic argument that the doctrine of the *Taiping jing* was family-centred.[179] However, he has found only very few instances[180] where this type of tradition was called *chengfu*.[181] Erik Zürcher has cited several early Daoist scriptures which mention that there is a family legacy of good or evil deeds.[182] This legacy is, according to Zürcher, what is meant

/which accumulates evil must later on suffer from evil, while a family which accumulates true texts and true teachings *(dao)* must later on transcend this world' (*TPJHJ* VII, p.688 [from the *TPJC*]).

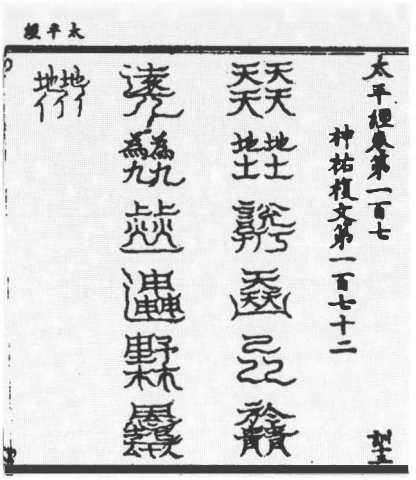
180 See *TPJHJ*, p.22 (from the *TPJC*); IV, chap.67, p.251 (A).

181 The passage (*TPJHJ* III, chap.37, p.54) does not prove the point Takahashi (on p.251) wishes to make, because here the transmission of evil from parents to children is introduced only as a simile *(biruo)* for the transmission of *chengfu*.

182 Zürcher, "Early Taoism," p.136.

Figure 8
Fu *characters.*
See Daozhang *edition, chap.104, p.3b*

Figure 9
Fu *characters.*
See Daozang *edition, chap.107, p.1a. This section is characterized by the preponderance of elements referring to "heaven"* (tian 天) *and "earth"* (di 地 *or* tu 土)



by *chengfu*, although he acknowledges that the term is absent from all these scriptures. He has dealt only with texts which, by the standards of the Paris Daozang 道藏 team, can safely be presumed to stem from the period between the second and the early sixth century. The *Taiping jing* is not included among these texts. From the evidence produced by Zürcher it is clear that the term *chengfu* as well as the concept of communally inherited evil (no matter how it is named[183]) are confined to the *Taiping jin* corpus.

The techniques which were regularly applied by Daoist religious personnel to save believers from the mischievousness of ancestors are not mentioned in the *Taiping* corpus. For this purpose Daoists had developed methods which invariably included an exchange with the deities in charge through the burning of texts.[184] They must have been abundant in early Daoism. The *Taiping* corpus does not refer to them, although texts are said to play a crucial role in the termination of *chengfu*. There is no advice on how to burn them, how to swallow their ashes, or how to put them in any other way to magico-religious use. Instead, the only advice offered is that the correct text should be kept in mind, transmitted, and used as a guide to action. The fact that four chapters of talisman characters are included in the corpus can only be seen as a hint at the rituals of exorcism;[185] although they were included in the corpus without any instructions for their use, their presence in it (if based on any original proximity of material) could in itself suggest that the *Taiping* missionaries did indeed use techniques of exorcism.

Concerning the term's relation to other Daoist teachings, Mugitani Kunio argued that *chengfu*, or more precisely the termination of *chengfu*, was in the tradition of a Daoist belief in salvation which had two divergent aspects.[186] One aspect was manifest in the writings of Ge Hong or Tao Hongjing which promised individual salvation to their literate and upper-class followers. The aims of Kou Qianzhi's New Heavenly Master Daoism were, according to Mugitani, similar, although the organizational methods were replicas of earlier communal rituals. The other aspect was manifest in works like the *Xiang'er*, the *Taiping jing*, the *Shenzhou jing* 神咒經 or the *Duren jing* 度人經, which aimed in a popular manner at mass salvation. According to Mugitani, both aspects of the salvation doctrine assimilated Buddhist aims and Buddhist religious techniques. Although it is obvious that both aspects occur in Daoist teachings as well, the neat distinction of personages and texts which was proposed by Mugitani in 1977 can probably

183 Among the passages cited by Zürcher (ibid., p.137), there is one in the *Shangqing zi qing junhuang shu zi ling daojun tongfang shangjing* (Schipper, *Concordance,* no.405) which could be seen to convey an idea similar to that of *chengfu*. It seems confusing to use the specific term *chengfu*, which occurs only in one particular corpus of texts, to convey an idea which it is only rarely used to convey in these particular texts.

184 See M. Strickmann, "Therapeutische Rituale und das Problem des Bösen im frühen Taoismus," in Naundorf, Pohl and Schmidt, *Religion und Philosophie in Ostasien*, pp. 185–200.

185 See *TPJHJ* VII, chap.104–7, pp.473–510; on Taoist *fu* and the religio-political use of texts in general, see A. Seidel, "Imperial treasures and Taoist sacraments. Taoist roots in the Apocrypha," in *Tantric and Taoist studies in honour of R.A. Stein*, ed. M. Strickmann, vol. 2, "Mélanges chinois et Bouddhiques, no.21," (Bruxelles: Institut Belge des Hautes Etudes Chinoises, 1983), pp. 291–371, at 315 et passim. *Taiping fu* are mentioned in the *Baopuzi*, cf. Ofuchi Ninji et al., *Dōkyō kyōten mokuroku*[Catalogue of the scriptures of Daoism] (Tokyo, Kokusho Kankōkai, 1988), p.28, no.390.

186 Cf. Mugitani Kunio, "Shoki Dōkyō ni okeru kyusai shisō" [Ideas on salvation in early Daoist religion], *Tōyō bunka* 57 (1977), pp.19–63.

not be sustained. The *Taiping* texts contain both aspects, and judging by the sixth-century preface to these texts, at least some of Tao Hongjing's followers must have taken a lively interest in the doctrine of mass salvation, in spite of their well-documented obsession with personal salvation. There would also seem to be a problem in Mugitani's periodization of the different methods of salvation. The recital of texts, which he sees as specific for later salvation doctrines as presented in the *Shenzhou jing* and *Duren jing*, does indeed not occur in the Taiping jing, but the possession and memorization of texts is certainly considered to be the most important road to salvation. Furthermore, the figure of the Heavenly Master, in spite of his anti-spectacular, highly respectable and quite traditional conduct, shares some traits with the Messiah figure introduced in the later doctrines.[187]

Evaluating the different accounts of the origin and historical role of the term *chengfu*, it seems safe to conclude that there is no reason not to attribute the invention of the term to the authors of the *Taiping* texts. The term is related to several concepts which prevailed in Han-dynasty thought but its usage is limited to the *Taiping* corpus, and no other term conveys the same meaning. The concept provides a link between the individual and a large group of believers, whose religious community is seen as transcending the family and political or geographical groupings. As with all missionary movements of some consequence, the concern of the *Taiping* texts is with mankind as a whole.

It is not within the scope of this paper to deal with the impact the early religious movements had on China's intellectual history. It is, however, obvious that a concept like *chengfu* could have had a role to play in the discourse of that period of wide-scale restructuring which commenced in the second century AD, when ancient China was on the point of disintegration. By implying that everyone's misdeeds may be detrimental to everyone else, the concept seems to offer the possibility of transcending social groups while leaving basic moral responsibilities intact. The fact, however, that the term did not play this role and never even managed to enter the central Daoist doctrine shows, in my opinion, that it was on the one hand too radically egalitarian to be acceptable or even discussable and that, on the other hand, it contained too much high-brow speculation and not enough basic religious consolation to endear itself to the common Daoist believer.

187 The salvation of the world depends on the appearance and apt performance of the Heavenly Master and his disciples; this basic doctrine of the *Taiping* texts the present writer finds difficult to call anti-messianistic, as Petersen (in "Anti-Messianism") attempts to do. On the other hand Petersen is right when he argues that the *Taiping jing* authors do not give their heroes the threatening revolutionary aura which was common among Han- and post-Han popular mass-leaders. In fact, the doctrine of the *Taiping* texts contains many conservative and soothing elements.

Conclusions

Does the material introduced in this paper allow any conclusions to be drawn concerning the date and composition of the texts in the *Taiping* corpus? One possible conclusion concerns the general background of the corpus. My understanding of the *chengfu* doctrine supports Yasui Kōzan's assumption regarding the origin of the text in Chan-Wei circles.[188] The *Taiping* A-type texts' theological and cosmological concerns fit more

188 Yasui Kōzan, "Dōkyō no seiritsu to Shin-I shisō" [The establishment of Daoism and Chan-Wei thought], in *Dōkyō to shukyō bunka* [Daoism and religious culture], ed. Akizuki Kanei (Tokyo: Hirakawa Shuppan, 1987), pp.45–60, at 54 ff.

naturally into this context than into any other, notwithstanding the respective epithets 'Daoist' (for the *Taiping jing*) or 'Confucianist' (for the apocryphal commentaries). These concerns are of importance in most passages dealing with the *chengfu* concept, even though the attitude taken is critical and the theory of automatic response put forward in some prognostic texts is rejected. The A-texts' authors were certainly intellectuals who wanted to influence their contemporaries via the traditional channels of education or intellectual persuasion. They were among the political leadership of their era or they aimed to be among them—otherwise their continuous accusations against those who doubted or felt resentment towards this leadership would have been in vain. The B-text arguments on personal guilt and on salvation by self-accusation seem to be much closer to the real evolution of religious life than the lofty theories of the A-type texts. So the B-text authors could well have come from early Daoist salvation movements. Takahashi's supposition concerning the more political character of A-texts as compared to the more religious contents of B- and (as I see it) C-texts can be upheld on the basis of material introduced in this paper,[189] but it must be kept in mind that the sources of the corpus appear to have been more diverse than stylistic differences would suggest.

[189] Takahashi, "*Taibeikyō* no shisō kōzō," p.324 et passim. Takahashi's attempts to give a chronological order to the different types of text (p.328) (in the order B–C–A) are presented without much supportive argumentation and are, as such, as plausible or implausible as any other arrangement.

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